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Gilbert, the Guide;
OR,
Lost in the Wilderness.

BY C. DUNNING CLARK,
AUTHOR OF "THE KING'S FOOL," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

GILBERT, THE GUIDE—THE ONONDAGA.

A PRIMEVAL forest, with a thick undergrowth, and scarcely a path broken through it, stretched away to the westward until it reached the banks of a grand old river flowing down toward the lake. Ducks and divers floated upon the tranquil surface, and tall herons stalked among the reeds which grew upon the bank. A canoe shot out of a bend in the river, and floated down the stream, under the strokes of a paddle in a strong hand, but noiseless as a floating feather. The man in the canoe was tall and muscular, and clothed in a ragged and

soot-begrimed suit of buckskin, with a tangled fringe. His face, browned by long exposure to the sun and wind, was nearly of the same color as that of an Indian or mulatto, but his slightly-curving hair, and huge, untrimmed beard and mustache, showed that he at least was not an Indian. A long rifle lay in the bow of the canoe, and beside it a pouch and powder-horn. A long knife was thrust into a leathern sheath at his side, and upon the other hung a heavy hatchet.

The man was the type of the borderman of his period, those dangerous times when the whole North-west Territory was exposed to predatory assaults from the north and west—from the many tribes of Indians, and even at times from the so-called friendly tribes. He moved cautiously, glancing from side to side, fearful that the coverts on either side might hide a lurking foe. Once he ceased paddling, and keeping his paddle in the water to direct the little craft, laid his hand upon the barrel of his rifle, but removed it when he saw a stately stag, with branching antlers, come down the bank to the water's side. Catching a glimpse of

the man in the canoe, he wheeled suddenly, and with a wild snort of fear, bounded up the bank and was lost to sight. A smile flitted over the bronzed face of the borderman, and then passed away, leaving it stern and sad again.

"Free!" he muttered. "The endless plain his abiding-place; the forest his shield by night and day. I might have killed him if I liked, but I am not the man for wanton destruction, I who have suffered so much and so long."

At this moment a whistle, sharp, clear and full, sounded from the depths of the forest, and the man raised his head quickly, and putting his fingers to his mouth, blew a shrill reply, which was answered by the same sound close at hand. He turned the head of the canoe toward the shore, and rising in it, holding onto the branches, he peered out into the woods in front. The bushes bent and cracked, and a young Indian, in the dress of the Onondagas, came out into the light—a noble specimen of forest beauty, hale and strong, with bright, glancing eyes, an erect figure, and a springing, elastic step, all combining to give him a lofty, commanding air. His dress was a buckskin hunt-



"CHIEF," SAID THE GUIDE, "THE DAYS HAVE BEEN LONG SINCE YOU HAVE BEEN AWAY."

ing-shirt, embroidered with beads by a skillful hand, and his leggings and moccasins were marked with various symbols in the same way. His dark hair was surmounted with a sort of coronet of feathers, marking him as a chief. He stretched out his hand and grasped that of the white man, who returned the pressure cordially.

"Chief," said the latter, speaking in the Onondaga tongue, "the days have been long since you have been away."

"Owasco is very proud to be the friend of the white man," replied the Indian. "He will always remember the night in the forest, when the long rifle of Gilbert saved him from the claws of the panther. When an Onondaga forgets, the streams will run up hill, the birds talk like men, and the trees grow downward. Owasco has been sad too, while parted from his white friend, but he has said to himself, 'There will be great joy when we meet again.'"

"Did you scent any danger when you came up the river?" asked the man called Gilbert.

"Yes. There is death in the air, and the scent of the battle came to the nostrils of Owasco. Let the people along the Miami look to themselves, for the Wyandots are on the war-trail."

"How do you know that?" demanded Gilbert, quickly. "Wyandots! A curse upon them, body and soul. May their lives be like mine, may their hopes wither as mine have, their homes lie in the blackness of desolation. I curse them with the curse of the broken and blighted heart, the sleepless eye and the pulseless limb. Lead me to them at once, and I will take vengeance upon them."

"My brother has suffered great evil at the hands of the Wyandots, or he would not curse them so," said the Indian. "Let him listen to the words of Owasco, and write his promise in his mind. I swear by the bones of the dead, by our sacred totem, by the everlasting flame, and the Great Spirit we all adore, to be true to you and never forsake you, until you have revenged yourself upon your enemies."

"Right, Owasco, right! I can trust you, and when I cease to do that, may my rifle fail me in a trying hour. But, what reason have you to think that the Indians are on the war-path?"

"Let Gilbert look at this," said the Indian, quietly, taking a pipe-bowl from the pocket of his hunting-shirt and giving it to the white man. He looked at it with a guttural exclamation of surprise, and turned it over in his hand and looked at it closely. It was a bowl of red clay, roughly carved with a knife. This was in itself nothing remarkable, for it is a common practice with the young braves to carve pipes out of the red sandstone with which the country abounds, but upon the side of this bowl was a cross, and the letters I. H. S.

"I see," said the borderman. "Some Indian who has been converted by the Catholics of Canada cut that bowl. It is new, too, and has not been dropped any great length of time. Where did you find it? These Canada Indians are stirring up the other nations."

"Close by the river, three miles below."

"Ha! say you so? These devils are drawing in close upon us then. Let them look to themselves, for they shall hear of Gilbert, the Guide, unless my right hand has forgotten her cunning. Did you look for the signs?"

"Yes. There are many Wyandots, and they are in the woods now. I fear that much suffering will be felt by the good white men who dwell below on the Miami of the Lakes" (the Maumee).

"We must be on the move. Wayne must know what is going on, and at once."

The chief suddenly laid his finger on his lip, and the voice of Gilbert was hushed. They waited, and heard a light step upon the forest leaves. The ardor of battle began to show itself in the face of Owasco, and he drew his hatchet from his belt, and stooping suddenly, moved with a rapid step out of the cover, closely followed by Gilbert. There was something wonderful in the ease with which these men passed over the dried leaves, without making a sound louder than the rustle of the wind among them. They reached the edge of a little opening, toward which the footsteps tended, and waited. They had not long to wait, for the rapid footfalls came nearer, and the bushes were pushed aside, and, instead of the painted warrior they looked to see, they beheld a beautiful girl, "brown, but comely," dressed in the garb of an Indian woman of high rank—a maid of such remarkable appearance that Gilbert could not repress a low exclamation of astonishment, and she paused with a shy, startled glance, and looked about her, as they darted out together. But the girl stood with a carbine at her shoulder, her beautiful cheek pressed tightly against the breech, and her dark eyes flashing through the double sights.

"Hold, there!" she cried, in good English. "What do you seek?"

Gilbert, who had tramped the country over, from the extreme North to Florida, and was an apt student in the ways of men, answered:

"Fear nothing from us, beautiful child. We war not with women, and would not injure a hair of your head."

She looked at them keenly, as if studying them, and appeared satisfied with the inspection, for she dropped the muzzle of the carbine, and finally let the breech drop to the earth at her feet. She was of slight but symmetrical figure, uncramped by the fashionable folly which regards unhealthy development as a beauty in woman. Her face was brown, but it was the effect of the sun, and it was plainly to be seen that she was not all Indian. Her hair, though black as midnight, had a lustrous gloss upon it never seen in the pure Indian, and fell in waving masses half-way to her feet. Her dress was of dark-green riding-cloth, fringed and embroidered in the manner which has never been attained by any except the Indian woman, and fell to the knee. Below this a crimson embroidered kirtle showed itself. Her limbs were incased in leggings of the same material as her dress, and she wore dainty moccasins. Upon her head was a sort of cap, with a waving heron feather at the side, giving her a piquant and charming expression. Besides the carbine with which she had threatened them, which was of English manufacture, and richly plated with silver ornaments, she carried a pair of silver-mounted pistols, and a dagger with a jewel in the hilt.

"Why do you stop me as I walk the woods?" she demanded, in a sweet voice. "Is it not free to all?"

"Yes; but there is danger for one so beautiful alone in the forest," said Gilbert. "May I ask your name and where you are going?"

"I have no name for the white man," she said. "I am the spirit that walks the woods. Where I go is nothing to you."

"But do you not fear?"

"What have I to fear? No Indian will touch me when I tell him my name, and my eye is quick and my aim true, when a white man dares insult me. But why should I refuse to tell you why I am here, though it is not necessary for you to know my name? Listen: let the young children stay within doors through the corn month, for they will be safer there; bid the old men sit close to the doors of the wigwam, as they smoke their pipes in the sun, and tell the warriors to sharpen their knives, and make the gates of their villages very strong, lest they should be broken down."

"You warn us of danger, and yet you wear the dress of a tribe who hate us, and speak the language of a people who are our deadliest foes," said Gilbert.

"It is true, and for that reason you should give greater heed to the warning. I hear a humming noise, as of an army marching to battle. The sound comes from the north and rides on the wings of the rushing wind. Red are the coats of the warriors, and their banner is the cross of St. George."

"Ha!"

"Warn them at Defiance, warn them at every place along the great river. A greater than Pontiac leads the army of braves to the battle, and lifts high the great banner—a man who was born a hero, and who will make wailing through all the land."

"The maiden speaks well," said Owasco. "Her voice is pleasant in the ear of a chief, like water running over the stones, making sweet music. Let her come to General Wayne and sing in his ears the words she says to us."

"I cannot," said the girl, quickly. "Go; you are warned."

"You must come with us," said Gilbert. "I cannot consent to leave you here."

"Do you hear that?" said the girl, raising her hand for silence. "My friends are at hand!"

A sharp, fierce cry, full of dread import, seemed to fill the forest on every side.

"Save yourselves if you can!" she cried. "I cannot aid you now."

CHAPTER II.

THE "HORNED OWL."

GILBERT, the Guide, had heard that sound too often before not to understand its meaning. The Indians, lurking in the woods, had struck the trail of the chief, Owasco, and were following it like sleuth-hounds.

"Into the canoe, chief," whispered Gilbert. "Girl, tell me honestly whether you are safe here, for if there is the least danger, I swear to you that I will not leave you, but will remain, if you will not go with me, and die by your side."

"I am safe, I am safe," she replied, quickly. "Have no fear on that score, but cross the river as quickly as you can."

"But we shall meet again?"

"I hope so," she said. "Go, if you would save your life, for I hear them close at hand."

Gilbert darted into the boat and pushed off quickly, making at once for the other bank, for the shouts told him that they were all upon the western side of the stream. Midway in the channel was a small island covered with a thick green foliage. The moment they reached it, the two men dragged the canoe out of the water and pushed it over the bank on the other side, and came back to see what was going on upon the spot they had left. The young girl, whoever she was, had followed them down to the water's edge, and they could see her stand-

ing alone upon the bank, listening to the sounds which came to her out of the forest.

"Hugh!" muttered Owasco, laying his hand upon his companion's arm. "See!"

Gilbert looked up-stream and saw a large canoe filled with warriors rounding the point above them and coming down the stream at full speed. Opposite the island they swung the head of the canoe toward the place where the girl stood, and landed.

Now, for the first time, Gilbert saw that they had a prisoner, for they were dragging a man up the bank with little ceremony, kicking and cuffing him in a spiteful way, and cursing him with a hearty good-will.

The river was so narrow at this point that every movement they made could not only be plainly seen, but every word was distinctly heard.

They were Wyandots, and were led by a man whom they recognized by a peculiar head-dress he wore, having two great eagle-feathers rising like horns in front, giving him a singular appearance. Both the guide and Owasco knew him by this to be a chief known as the "Horned Owl," one of the most bitter enemies of the Americans among all the tribes.

"And that old scoundrel lives yet," muttered Gilbert. "You see that man, Owasco? Then know that his life is mine, and I will have it. Never aim at his breast, except to save a life, for he is my worst enemy and I have sworn to kill him."

"The Owl is a very bad man, but he is a brave warrior," said Owasco. "Why not shoot him now?"

"No, no. He must not die until I have torn from his base heart the secret he hides there—the secret which it is my life's business to unravel. What are they doing with that fellow? As I live by bread, it is that young Irishman who lives with Jan Phieffer, at the Oak Openings. I wonder how they caught the rascal?"

They dragged the prisoner more out into the light, kicking and cuffing him. For some reason they were highly incensed with him, and were proceeding to greater enormities, when the girl advanced, and laid her hand upon the arm of the Owl, saying something to him which he did not seem to like, for he stamped impatiently, and spoke quickly to his men in the Indian language, who at once ceased to beat the boy, and hauled him along until he stood before the young girl.

"I begin to understand," said Gilbert. "That girl seems to have a great deal of power among the Indians, does she not? Then, in my opinion, she can be only one person."

The chief nodded, and kept his eyes upon the prisoner. He was a lean, shock-headed, bright-looking boy, of undoubtedly Milesian origin, who had taken the many stripes he had received with a philosophical composure which was praiseworthy.

"Who are you?" said the girl, whose clear, rich voice reached the men on the island easily.

"Pat O'Driscoll," replied the boy.

"What were you doing in the woods to-day?"

"None of your business," replied the boy, with sturdy independence. "I want ye to know that I do just as I want in the woods."

"You must be careful how you answer me. The warriors say that you were spying about their camp," replied the girl.

"It's a lie, thin," replied the lad, with great composure. "The devil resave the step I tuk to folly them. Sure an' I have betther business than to chase a lot av red naygurs like them."

"The impudent young scoundrel will get himself into trouble," whispered the Guide. "Can we do nothing for him?"

"Pat has a long tongue," said the chief. "He will make the hearts of the Wyandots burn within them, and they will light the death-fire about him, unless the Queen of the Lake will stand his friend."

"Can she save him?" said Gilbert.

"My brother knows it," said Owasco. "Who has not heard of the Queen of the Lake and her wonderful power among the Wyandots? From the great falls to the lake of the North they have heard her name. She prophesies great things, and they come to pass. Her voice is heard in the council, and old men listen, and say it is good. She walks the woods like a spirit, and no man dare say to her, 'Come no further.' Great medicine is the Queen of the Lake."

"Boy," said the Queen, with a haughty look, "you do not know to whom you speak or what you say. These braves who have taken you have been taught to hate men of your nation, and to kill them wherever they can find them. Do not use your tongue so freely, or no one can tell what may happen."

"Lookee here," retorted Pat; "I'm an Irishman mesilf, born an' brid, till the backbone. I'm thru grit, too, and I'm like the bull-dog—once I seize hould av any wan, I never lit go till the tath break or the piece comes out. Who! Here's til the 'gem av the say,' Erin go bragh! Who! I kin bate the hid av inny man that spakes a wurrud against ould Ireland."

The Queen turned to her men and touched her forehead significantly. "Brethren," she

said, "we dare not injure one upon whom the hand of the Great Spirit is laid."

The Indians bowed their heads silently, for they had seen the wild gestures and heard the shouts of the Irish boy, and did not believe that any one in his senses could possibly behave in that manner.

"Phat d'y'e mane?" yelled Pat. "Is it that I'm crazy yees would be sayin'? Och, thin, be the powers, and it's a sad time that's come to the blood av the O'Driscolls, whin haythen like yees should call them crazy. The devil a bit."

"He'll spoil all yet," muttered the Guide, "and you can see that the Queen wants to save him. If he does get away, and I ever meet him, I'll thrash him within an inch of his life for being such a fool. The young rascal don't want sense, and he ought to show it now."

"He could not do it better," said the chief. "See, he dances like one mad, and waves his hands in the air."

"Whillaloo, murther!" shouted Pat. "Howly saints an' martyrs be good to us, but it's kilt intirely I am wid the thought of such shame coming to the house av O'Driscoll. To the devil wid ye, thin, for I won't stay wid ye at all, at all."

Bursting suddenly through the ranks of his captors, Pat plunged into the stream, and began to swim lustily toward the island upon which the two men had found shelter. Thinking him insane, the Indians had no intention of losing their prisoner, and before he had gone a hundred feet, four men were in the water, swimming after him with all their force, while he headed straight for the island.

"The young villain is coming here," said Gilbert, in alarm. "Let's get out of this."

"No," said the chief. "They will see us. Come up tree."

Clasping the trunk of a young beech-tree which grew close to the water's edge, the Indian quickly ensconced himself in the branches, while the Guide as quickly climbed a birch at his side, and lay hidden among the leaves. A loud, puffing noise was heard, and Pat Driscoll's head emerged from the water. He dragged himself out and cast a quick glance at his pursuers. They were not ten feet away, and snatching up a heavy bludgeon which lay upon the bank, Pat danced wildly about, shouting to the savages to come, an invitation which they at once accepted. The first, rushing incautiously at the supposed maniac, received a terrific whack upon the head, which caused him quickly to change the perpendicular for the horizontal position. They had thrown aside their weapons before plunging into the stream, not dreaming that the boy would make any resistance, but they reckoned without their host. Pat was a well-built young fellow, and though but nineteen years of age, was rather famous for athletic sports of all kinds.

The first man being *hors de combat*, the Irish boy performed a peculiar *pas seul* over his senseless body, and then rushed at the remaining savages, who were coming up the bank to seize him. All were athletic men, and were ashamed of the contest in which they were engaged, as being unworthy of their prowess, but they had yet to learn that the Irishman fights from a natural liking for the amusement. They ran in together to seize him, but, with a shout which would have done credit to the "Horned Owl," he bounded into the air like a stag, and planted his feet in the breast of the heaviest man, sending him to join the first victim upon his mother earth. Alighting upon his feet he knocked down the man upon his right hand, and, clinching the fourth, they rolled down the bank into the water with a resounding splash. The Indian was undermost, and his head struck a stone protruding from the water with a shock which caused a nebulous flood to stream before his eyes, and consciousness was gone. Pat leaped up, shook both clinched hands at the astounded party upon the other side of the stream, and darted up the bank, just as Gilbert and his companion slid to the ground. Thinking that he saw another enemy before him, Pat ran at Owasco with raised club, but the voice of Gilbert restrained him.

"Hold on, Pat. What are you doing now, you young scoundrel; don't you know your friends? Into the canoe and away, for there is not a moment to lose."

Stopping long enough to give a parting rap to one of the Indians who showed signs of consciousness, Pat jumped into the canoe, followed immediately by the Guide and Owasco, and, taking the paddle, Gilbert pushed desperately for the other bank, keeping the island between him and the party of Indians, who had already pushed out their canoe and were making for the island, to capture their escaping maniac. They did not dream of the presence of Owasco and the Guide or they would have made greater haste, and the canoe reached the other bank and was hauled up out of sight before they were at the island, where they found the sorely-maltreated Indians tumbled about in various positions upon the blood-stained sward, with "bloody noses and cracked crowns"—the fruits of their encounter with this irate Milesian. As they searched angrily up and down

for the boy, whom they of course supposed to be still upon the island, they came upon the tracks of Gilbert and Owasco.

"Hugh!" said the Owl. "Owasco has been here, and his white friend. Seek for him wherever you can, and we will light a fire and burn them."

They searched in every nook and cranny of the island, of course without success, until the Owl came upon the place where the canoe had left the shore. Trained from boyhood to read every sign in the forest, he knew at once that the boy had escaped, and how. He sent a swimmer back with a message to the "Queen," and had the canoe carried over, and with seven men besides himself pushed for the opposite bank. There they found the canoe, a large hole broken in the bottom, but no trail leading up the bank except in a single place, where it ended abruptly. The Owl knew enough of forest craft to understand that the men he hunted were learned in the ways of the woods and that a pursuit of them now was hopeless. Though burning to avenge the injury which had been done him by Pat, he abandoned the design and pushed off. When the canoe was midway in the stream a rifle cracked upon the shore, and a puff of white smoke shot up from the bushes a hundred yards up the water-course, and the man who sat behind the Owl fell, shot through the shoulder.

There spoke the rifle of Gilbert, the Guide, and the Owl knew its crack well. For fifteen years, wherever it had been his destiny to wander, he had heard of this strange man as following him with the patient endurance of one who had but a single object, and worked steadily to accomplish it. Whatever the secret between them, which Gilbert had avowed he would work out, it was of sufficient importance to protect the chief from death, for in those long years the Guide had had opportunities of killing him, had such been his object, a hundred times. Other Indians of the tribe had he killed without mercy, but this, his worst and hated enemy, was spared, for what object was only known to himself.

How had he left the bank of the stream without leaving tracks in the soil? The ways of the forester are full of wonderful contrivances to throw the enemy off the trail, and this was a simple yet excellent rule. Stripping off his hunting-shirt, and telling the others to do the same, he had spread them upon the ground and then stepped lightly over them, always stopping upon the last one to take up the one they had just passed over and pass it to the front, where Owasco spread it carefully in advance. In this way they gained a hundred yards from the bank, always keeping the less experienced boy between them, without leaving a footprint. This done, they put on their hunting-shirts and stole up the bank to watch the movements of the enemy. They saw them turn away, baffled by their cunning, and in this moment the Guide could not resist the desire to fire at the canoe.

All was in confusion for a moment, and the chief seemed to meditate pursuit, when a peculiar signal call from the bank upon which they had left the Queen of the Lake called them away, and the canoe was quickly buried in the foliage upon the other shore.

CHAPTER III.

THE BATEAU.

"HA!" cried the Guide. "That means something a little out of the ordinary line of events, or the Owl would never leave us after what has happened. Some one is coming, either up or down the river. Owasco, go down-stream and see if you can study it out, and I'll take the boy and go up. You'll stick by me, young one?"

"Handy Pat Driscoll is me name, and I'll never disgrace it," said Pat. "Av it's a shindy yees would be lading me intil, I'm the b'y that'll folly yees wheriver ye may like to go."

Owasco glided away, and telling the boy to follow and imitate as well as he could his agile and singularly silent movements, Gilbert pushed his way through the tangled underbrush of the stream for half a mile. The dip of oars was heard, and a bateau shot out from a curve in the stream and held its course between the verdant banks. Four men were at the oars, while a fifth sat in the stern and guided it downward by a steering-oar. Just in front of him a huge wolf-dog lay, with his head upon his paws, at the feet of a young and singularly beautiful woman, who was pulling the ears of the dog in a teasing, playful manner.

"Hi!" cried Gilbert, running out upon the bank. "In the boat! Mr. Waterman!"

The young man who was steering looked up with a start of surprise, and as he saw who called he turned the head of the bateau toward the shore and sprung out, shaking hands with the Guide heartily.

"Glad to see you, old boy," he said. "What brings you up the river now?"

"Danger, sir. How could you be so foolish as to attempt the descent of the river now, without letting me know? and with a lady, too! Are you aware that the Indians are on the war-trail, and that the approaching cloud of war-like bands is only the precursor of a mightier

force, which will sweep down like an avalanche from the west and north?"

"We have heard some such rumors at the forts," replied the young man; "but we give little credence to them."

He was a tall, finely-built, aristocratic-looking man, in the dress of a civilian, though he was in fact an Indian agent of the United States Government. The lady, who had been sitting in the boat, rose and came forward. As his eyes fell upon her face, the Guide gave a cry of surprise and started back, for he saw in that face the living counterpart of the "Queen of the Woods," except that the skin was fairer. In height, in figure, in form of feature, the resemblance was perfect and wonderful. She was dressed in a manner calculated to bear the more readily the fatigues of a backwoods journey, in a rather short dress of some dark stuff, with thick shoes and gloves. The dark, expressive eyes which met his reminded him so forcibly of the Queen of the Woods that he gave vent to his feelings in the way we have stated.

"Who is this person, Mr. Waterman?" she said. "One of the guides of whom you spoke?"

"This, Helen, is the same one whose wonderful escapes I have told you so much about, Gilbert, the Guide. If his comrade were here, I would show you the most perfectly-framed man in the North-west Territory."

"I am glad to meet one who has made himself so famous in the annals of the border," said the lady, quietly, "and I must congratulate my friend Waterman upon his sublime conquest over self, since having a symmetrical figure himself, he has granted that there lives a man who has a better."

"An Indian of the Onondaga nation, and his name is Owasco," said the agent. "I—"

"Sorry to interrupt you, Mr. Waterman, but every moment we lose is precious. You are in great peril, for as I told you before, the Indians are on the war-path, and the river is lined with them. The band I have just had a fracas with are nearly twenty in number, led by the famous chief, Horned Owl."

The laughing face of the young agent became instantly grave, and he looked anxiously at his lady companion, whose lip trembled a moment at the terrible news, and then became firm as steel.

"What shall we do?" said the officer. "Oh, Helen, I fear that I have led you into a dreadful danger."

"Your danger is not less," she said, "and I am the daughter of a soldier, and can meet death boldly, if death must come. But is there no way of escape?"

"They are all on the west side of the stream yet," said Gilbert, "and I am not certain that they dare attack you. But if they do, and the lady is in the bateau, she is almost certain to be hurt. They have only one canoe, and that will carry ten men. What sort of fighters are those in the bateau?"

"They will fight, and fight well," said the agent. "We might break through, as you say they have but one canoe."

"They'd pick off every man before you got half a mile down-stream, I'm afraid," said Gilbert, in a musing tone. "I must have Owasco up here, for the fellow knows their tricks, and he has found out just what they mean to do by this time."

He raised his hand to his mouth and gave the signal which he had used before in calling the chief, and it was answered from a spot so close at hand that the lady started and looked surprised as the bushes parted and Owasco, a little flushed by the exercise of running, came suddenly out.

"Now, chief," said the Guide, in a questioning tone. "Is there any chance of the bateau going down?"

"Not with white girl," said Owasco. "Too much shoot gun down there."

When Owasco was excited, he spoke broken English in a manner that would have put a Dutchman to the blush, and he was excited now.

"What do you propose?" said the Guide. "Speak quick."

"Men go down in bateau; fight, kill Wyandot, then come back and take squaw."

"But are there no more than these twenty of whom you speak?"

"Plenty down river," said the chief, quietly. "Kill 'em all."

"I have a proposal to make," said Gilbert. "I do not know whether you will accept it or not, but it seems to me the only plan. You must let the chief save this lady by hiding her in a place which he knows of. We, as men, will join our forces and break through the lines of the enemy, and bring aid from below. What do you say?"

"I leave it entirely with Helen. If she is willing to trust herself to the guidance of Owasco, I can only say that no man here is more worthy of confidence than he," replied Waterman.

The chief drew himself up proudly, and looked the forest hero that he was, firm, self-reliant. Helen, without a moment's hesitation, placed herself at his side.

"I will go with you," she said, simply.

"It is well," replied Owasco. "Come." The young agent did not waste time in bidding her farewell, but pressed her hand earnestly to his lips, and she followed the chief at a quick pace out of the thicket, and struck into a forest path leading away from the river to the east. Not half a mile from the place where they had left the party they came upon a thicket of pine bushes, in the midst of which grew up an old dead sycamore, whose root was overgrown by briars and bushes, mostly of the ground blackberry species. Lifting some of the trailing vines, the chief showed an opening in the trunk of the sycamore, large enough to admit the body of a man.

"Am I to go in here?" she said.

"Yes," replied the chief. "Owasco will show you what to do."

Entering the huge hollow trunk, she was surprised to find that it was not very dark, and looking up she could see the sky through a great opening at the top. Sticks had been driven into the wood at close intervals and about six feet from the ground was a rude seat, set into the tree, with a place below for the feet.

"You will stay here," said the chief, "until I or Gilbert call you. If any one looks in who does not say 'Here I come,' you will not answer, for they cannot see you from below. You have nothing to fight with, if an enemy should come. Will you take Owasco's hatchet?"

"I have pistols here, which Mr. Waterman gave me, but I will take the hatchet, too, if you will give it to me."

He handed the hatchet to her with a grace which would have done credit to a courtier, and then assisted her to ascend to the seat above, which, from below, looked in the obscurity of the place like one of the natural obstructions to be found in the hollow of a tree. To make the darkness greater, he fastened a piece of buck-skin which hung from the sides, across the opening above, so that the darkness became intense.

"See," said Owasco. "You will want some light, and here it is."

He drew out a couple of pegs from the tree in front of her, and showed small circular openings slanting downward, by which she could look out into the opening about the tree, and readily tell if any one came near the place.

"I leave you now," he said. "But be sure that a chief of the Onondagas never forgets, and that you are safe here. You will soon hear the sound of the battle and the cries of men in agony, but it cannot come near you."

"Good-by. I hope you will be spared; but if you do not come back, what shall I do?"

"If I do not come back, wait all night, and then find the river and try to get to the army. It is ten miles from the river, on the road to Defiance, and perhaps the Great Spirit will guide you safe to it."

He dropped from his perch and crept out at the opening, and she heard him arranging the briars in front. A moment after he darted across the clearing, turned a backward look at the tree to satisfy himself that everything was right, stood for a moment in an attitude which reminded her of an old classic statue, and was gone. She was alone—alone in the dim recesses of the great sycamore, with the eternal forest about her. She could see quite well from her elevated perch, and through an opening in the woods she caught a glimpse of shining water, and knew that the Miami (Maumee) was in sight. A low bank, clothed with soft green foliage, swept down to the water's edge, and as she gazed she could not help a feeling of admiration at the beauty of the landscape, even while she was conscious that on that river her friends were busy, trying to break through the cordon of their enemies.

The fair landscape was blotted, for there darted from the thicket across the spot of green turf a stalwart figure, clothed in the fantastic garb of the Indian, wearing upon his head a peculiar head-dress, upon which two long feathers rose like horns. Another and another followed, until fourteen men had passed, all armed with guns, for she could see them flashing in the sunlight. They had not yet begun to use the clouded barrel for firearms, except in rifles, and most of these Indians carried the regulation arm of the English service.

They were gone some moments, when another and stranger figure drew the attention of Helen. It was the figure of the Queen of the Lake, who had come out upon the green spot of earth which lay within the line of vision of the girl in the tree, dressed in her picturesque garb, and watching the river with keen, inquiring eyes.

Who was this strange girl, who came and went as she would, asking no aid from any one, confident in her own power to defend herself from insult as well as danger? She stood with her hands tightly clasped upon the muzzle of her gun, and her eyes fixed upon some object up the river. The distance was too great to distinguish features, but her attitude betrayed her great interest in the drama which was being enacted above.

There was a sudden hush and stillness, the silence which precedes the earthquake, and the girl in the tree, who had lived for some years in the midst of wild border scenes, knew enough

of the habits of the Indians to understand that they were perfecting their plans for the insnaring of the men in the bateau. All at once there came a resounding cheer, the cry of the Americans rushing into battle, the voice which tells with what enduring and patient valor the Anglo-Saxon fights, and the bateau came foaming round the point, headed directly toward the island which lay below. Their coming was the signal for the secret foe to break out into a tempest of screams and yells, and pandemonium seemed to have broken out upon earth. Down came the bateau, four strong rowers tugging with might and main, and Gilbert, Waterman and the chief standing with leveled weapons, ready to fire at the first red-skin who showed himself. The muskets gave tongue as they rounded the point, and the rifle of Gilbert, the Guide, came slowly to his cheek, as an Indian, after discharging his musket, attempted to dart from one cover to another. He seemed to take no aim, for the moment the rifle was level it cracked. The savage threw up his hands, and with a yell of agony which woke all the echoes in the dim old woods, dropped to the earth, rolling about in the agonies of death, pierced by the deadly ball.

"He did it once too often," remarked Gilbert, sternly. "The pitcher that goes often to the spring is broken at last."

A bullet, better aimed than the others, caught a lock of his whisker as it flew past and twitched his head sharply to one side; but he laughed lightly as he hastily reloaded his rifle, even while the bateau flew on. Those of my readers who have fired at a stag upon the leap know that it is no easy trick to do it right, and it is not so surprising that the close fire of the savages was not more effectual, when we consider the weapons used and the excitement of the moment. Besides, the Indians had a prudent regard for the excellent aim of the Guide and Owasco, and the death of one of their number had given them a lesson, and before they had time to think the bateau had reached the island in safety, and the men had scrambled out and hauled the boat by main force high upon the bank, while the Indians howled dismally in the woods.

All this wild scene Helen had seen from her perch in the sycamore, and she could hardly help uttering a cry of joy. But her triumph was short-lived, for, happening to turn her eyes downward, she saw something which seemed to curdle the blood in her veins. What was it?

A great black bear was prowling about the roots of the tree, evidently seeking to force a passage into the opening at the root. Whether he had been frightened by something he had met, and had been cut off from his own lair, or scented the girl in the tree, it is impossible to say, but there he was, prone upon the earth, tearing at the opening with teeth and claws, growling savagely as he did so. Though not naturally ferocious, the black bear will make a terrible enemy when driven into a corner, and at certain seasons of the year. This one was evidently excited and determined to get into the tree. Fearfully alarmed, and thinking that her time had come, the poor girl stared down at the shaking bark and flying splinters of rotten wood which were dropping under the assault of the bear. She could see his white teeth, gleaming eyes and sharp claws at the opening, and then he forced his hairy body inch by inch into the cavity, until she saw him standing upon his hind feet and snuffing the air below with an air of enjoyment.

Helen Carlyon came of fighting blood, and though she saw death very near her, she was too brave a girl not to turn upon it bravely, and, if necessary, die fighting. The pistols which Waterman had given her were loaded, and she laid them side by side upon the little shelf upon which she kneeled, and took up the hatchet. From the position of the shelf she knew that the bear must come up the tree with his back to her, and she would have a chance at him. He appeared in no hurry to make the ascent, snuffing industriously about every part of the sycamore, and biting off wood in a playful manner, looking up at her now and then with an unpleasant glance in his wicked eye. The brute evidently thought that his work was easy, and he could do it whenever he thought fit, and need not hurry about it. Helen glanced hurriedly toward the island and saw that no help could come to her from that direction, for the defenders of the little place were busy with their axes cutting down trees and bushes and building a barricade about the island in every place where it would be possible to land, making the place a fortress. It was hard to die here alone, hemmed into this narrow place, which now must be her tomb. She was young, and life was at its sweetest with her. To die by this horrible death might have made a strong man tremble. But, a braver heart never beat in woman's breast than that which heaved under the bodice of Helen Carlyon. Kneeling on the little shelf with hatchet poised for a blow, she met with an undaunted glance the fiery eyes of the bear, and waited for the assault.

He was evidently playing with her, as a cat plays with a mouse, taking great delight in add-

ing to her torture. Twice he commenced the assault, and as often sat back upon his haunches and rubbed his stupid head with his fore paw, with a single eye fixed upon the brave girl. At last he seemed determined to end it, for he began to climb up the inside of the tree. She stooped a little and poised the hatchet, and, as he came within reach, leveled a furious blow at his head. He put up his heavy paw, and with one pat sent the hatchet flying out of her hand, and it fell with a dull clang to the earth below. She felt that death was near.

CHAPTER IV. THE ISLAND.

GILBERT, the Guide, knew the signs of the forest well, and he had not been long in deciding that it would be impossible to go down the river in the face of the enemy who lined the banks. Though they might break through the first band, he knew that they could cross the bends in the river and be ready to meet him at every turn, even if many more were not posted below. The island was small and heavily timbered, and they might barricade it in such a way that they could beat off the enemy, while either himself or the chief made his way to the army of Wayne, and brought the soldiers to their relief.

They had hardly reached the island, when they began to work like beavers to make the place a fortress. Small trees were cut down, heavy branches intertwined, and everything done which military skill upon the part of Waterman and knowledge of Indian fighting on the part of Gilbert and Owasco could devise for the defense of the place. They would not have been allowed to do this if the Horned Owl had had any means of getting at them, but he knew that if he attacked them in the single canoe not one in five would live to reach the island.

"Where did you leave the girl, Owasco?" said Gilbert, as the two were lifting the end of a heavy log to lay upon the barricade.

"In the hollow tree," said the chief. "She is better there if she is not frightened, for a Wyandot knife digs deep."

"You need not fear for her courage," said the young official. "I have seen few men in my time who had braver hearts than that weak girl, when real danger threatens her. If you think she is safely hidden, that is all I ask."

"Do you see yonder giant sycamore that stands so high above the others?" said Gilbert. "There, a little to the right of that pine."

"The one with the dry top?"

"Yes; she is in that tree."

"In it? I don't know what you mean," said Waterman.

"Well, Owasco and I need hiding-places often times, and so we mark them wherever we find them. That tree is hollow, and we've fixed it so that you can climb up several feet inside, and sit upon a shelf we've set in there. That's where the girl is. I reckon she's watching us now, and I'll bet she wanted to cheer when we got through safe."

"How can she see us if she is in the tree?" Waterman asked.

"We made peep-holes for observation. Ah, the sights we have seen and the fights we have fought together, Owasco and I! Never you fear for the girl, for she's as safe there as she would be in the forts. I don't think any one would dream of looking for her there. So when you come to the close grapple, think that she is looking on, and fight bravely."

A flash came into the handsome face of the young man, and the sad eye of the Guide seemed to catch a gleam from it, for it grew brighter.

"He's young," he muttered. "and he don't know trouble yet, least of all such trouble as mine. He's young, and loves a woman, as I did once. What will he be if he lives to see everything he loved torn from him at once, and the hearthstone black and desolate? It makes the heart warm, though, to come in contact with one like this, whose sorrows are yet to come. Give me that rifle, Pat. I see something moving on the shore, yonder, and I guess I'll find out what it is."

As he brought the rifle to his shoulder, he started and uncocked the weapon quickly.

"May the arm rot off at the shoulder if I shed her blood," he said. "I was very near it then, and I'd never forgive myself if I'd done it."

"Who is it?" inquired Waterman.

"The girl; the little beauty we met in the woods to-day," answered the Guide.

"Not Helen? Don't tell me that you see her there, Gilbert!"

"No, it ain't her, but if this girl's skin was not so brown, and she'd got on Christian clothes you'd say it was the same. You saw me start in surprise when I saw the girl you call Helen to-day, did you not?"

"Yes. I did not understand it, and had no time to ask you to explain yourself."

"This is an Indian girl, whom the Wyandots call Queen of the Lake—a strange girl as ever you saw, and the picture of Helen. She is a wonderful creature, and speaks French, English and Indian, and if your story of Helen's bravery is true, this one is like her in that."

"Och, ain't she jist a beauty, though?" put in

Pat. "The eyes av her shine like stars in a bright night, an' whin she spakes, it's jest the music av the violin, flute an' bugle tied up the gither."

"Have you seen her too, Pat?" demanded Waterman.

"Sure an' didn't them bla'g'ards have me the morn, ownly I w'udn't condescind to stay wid them? They tied me up an' they bate me, an' they kicked me, an' the sorra resave the bit or sup I'll enjoy until I get aven wid them. Och-one, ochone, an' who will uphold the proud name of O'Driscoll, whin the last av the race is bate about the head by a lot av bloody-minded haythen like them over there."

"You paid some of them on this very island," said Gilbert, "and I say that it was a gallant deed, worthy even of the name of O'Driscoll. As I live, Waterman, that youngster, with nothing in his hand but a club, met and whiped four of those red knaves yonder, knocking them over like nine-pins, when they chased him from the bank."

"Let him fight as well when they assail us, and we will give a good account of the rascals," said Waterman. "What are they at now? There seems to be some movement along the shore which I do not understand."

"They are preparing for an assault, perhaps," answered the Guide. "There comes the canoe, so get ready your weapons. No, down with them, men, or you make an enemy of me! I will not have that girl injured, and one man can do us no harm."

The canoe pushed out from the bank, with the "Queen of the Lake" sitting in the bow, waving in her hand a white flag upon the end of a ram-rod. In the stern, holding the paddle in a firm clasp, and with a cold, haughty look upon his savage face, was the chief known as the Horned Owl. He evidently knew that the white men respected a flag, for he had no hesitation in putting himself in their power. A fearful light came into the eyes of Gilbert, the Guide; his face was terrible, and his hands opened and shut convulsively, as if he longed to be at the throat of the Indian, and restrained himself with difficulty.

"What is the matter with you, Gilbert?" said Waterman. "I never saw a man look so fierce as you do now."

"Watch me closely," said Gilbert, in a strange, hissing whisper, "and if you see a weapon in my hand tear it from me, for I am not always master of myself. It is horrible to meet that man, face to face, and not be able to touch him, or demand of him the secret to know which I would forfeit my life itself."

The canoe shot across the intervening space and the girl sprung out, holding the flag in her hand. As she came up the bank she gave it to the Indian, who held it carelessly, looking about him with keen and prying eyes, to see what had been done to resist an attack. They received him behind the strongest part of the barricade and his countenance did not change, although in his secret heart he was deeply enraged to see how much they had done to make the place impregnable to attack from without.

As Waterman saw the face of Morena, the Queen of the Lake, he too was wonderfully impressed by the resemblance between her and Helen. The same delicate, pensive sweetness about the red lips, white and small teeth, and penciled eyebrows. Gilbert had told him the truth when he said that she was a living copy of Helen.

"I am Morena, Queen of the Lake," she said. "And I am here to speak for Darromed, the Owl, who would sing in the ears of his white brothers."

"Let the Owl speak," responded Waterman. "What does he here in the Miami country, away from the home of the Wyandots, with weapons in his hands, seeking the blood of the Americans? Does he not know that the great father Washington is quick to avenge any of his braves who are slain?"

"The Owl does not wear the belt of the Yankee father by the great salt lake," said Morena, speaking for him. "His home is the land of the great white owl and of the moose. He dwells under the shade of the wing of the great English nation, that loves all who fight for its flag, and he wears the belt of a chief. You hear the wind blow through the parted leaves, but can you tell me where the caves lie from which the wind comes, or where it goes when its duty is done? So it is with the Wyandot. Mohawk, Potawatomie or Yankee are all the same to him, and he will hunt the deer upon their land if he likes."

"The chief speaks like a great brave," said Waterman, "and his speech does not lose any thing, because beautiful lips have spoken it for him in my ears. But my brother is in the wrong when he speaks so lightly of the Great Father, to whom we all bow down. His arms are long and stretch far out over the water to his children on this side of the land. His ears are always open, and he can hear the smallest child when it cries for help. This is right and just, and as a great chief should do for his children. What does the Owl seek in the nest of the Eagle?"

"The Horned Owl comes with open hands to

demand his rights at the hands of the Yengees. Two men are in the camp who are not friends to the Owl, and he has come to seek them, a long and weary way, because he hates them, and would have their scalps to hang in his wig-wam. I see them as they stand there trying to look fierce in the eyes of a great chief. One of them is called Gilbert, and he is a dog that barks continually at the heels of a great chief, who is tired of hearing so much noise always, and would have it cease. The other man stands by his side, and it is a shame to the name of the Indian that his skin is red, for none but a dog and coward would make friends with the white dog whom he follows."

"Let him take care what he says," muttered Gilbert. "I am not the man to endure every thing, especially from him."

"The Owl hoots," said Owasco, proudly, in the Indian tongue, "but who dreads the hooting of an owl? I have often seen the back of Darromed, and when for the first time I see his face, he comes with a white flag in his hand, because he fears to meet a chief of the Onondagas without it. Go; you are a fool."

A look of fearful passion flashed across the face of the Owl, and his hand gripped convulsively at his hatchet. Gilbert had been secretly struggling with himself through this terrible meeting, and now his passion seemed suddenly to get the better of him, for with a cry of rage he flung himself upon the Indian and seized him by the throat. Before any one could interfere the savage was down, pinned to the earth, and helpless in the grasp of the Guide.

"Dog, wolf!" screamed Gilbert. "At last, at last, I have you in my power. Tell me that which I seek to know, or as the Lord liveth, you are a dead man."

Waterman and Owasco seized Gilbert and dragged him away from the chief, who rose with a snarl like a tiger, and drawing a knife, rushed upon the Guide. But Pat O'Driscoll, who had been boiling to take a hand in the "shindee," as he called it, suddenly sprung in the way, flourishing with a dexterous hand a shillalah, which he had snatched from the ground. With the lightness and activity which can only be emulated by an Irishman, he danced up to the chief, dealing him a tremendous whack upon the head with the stick, which sent him staggering back. But for this timely aid, the Guide, pinioned as he was by his two friends, would have suffered at the hands of his enemy. As it was, the Owl turned all his rage upon the Irishman, and made repeated and vicious cuts at him with the knife, which Pat eluded with agility, and repaid by a shower of skillful blows which astonished the Indian considerably.

"Stop!" cried Waterman. "Speak to the chief, you who call yourself Queen of the Lake, and tell him if he does not be quiet I will shoot him down, even under the flag."

Morena spoke quickly to the chief, who subsided instantly, although he still cast angry glances at the party.

"Tell the chief from me that he must not insult my friends, who seem to have some special reason for hating him. Let him go on with what he has to say."

"He demands that you give up Owasco and Gilbert, and the Irish boy to him, to do with as he likes."

"None of these men are under my orders," replied Waterman, quietly, "and I have no power over them. At the same time I do not hesitate to say that if they were ever so much in my power, I would not yield them up. If this is the chief's demand, the quicker he goes away the better."

"You do not know his power," said the girl, "and I must tell you what you have to encounter. By nightfall he will have a hundred warriors, for this is the appointed rendezvous, and he has sent out scouts to bring in the stragglers. You look at me strangely, as at a woman who is a marvel of her kind. That is because the kindness of good friends I have in Canada has taught me much, which a simple Indian girl could never learn. Why do I follow the band of the Owl; why roam the forest alone? These are the questions in your minds even now, but I cannot answer them. My fortune is bound by an indissoluble tie to this people, and I cannot leave them, though I have done all I could to prevent bloodshed. One of your party is not here."

"I do not understand you."

"You do!" replied the girl, promptly. "A beautiful woman was with you when you rested this morning under the shadow of the rocks above the pine forest. I saw you, but you did not see me, nor did the band then know of your presence. What have you done with the lady?"

"She is, I hope, safe."

"Then she is hidden somewhere. Trust me, white man. I am but a child in years, but I never did a wicked or cruel thing in all my life. It may be that it will not be in your power to go to her where she is hidden, and lead her to a place of safety. The arms of the Wyandots are long, and they may overpower you to-night, and if they do, what will become of the beautiful woman?"

"Are you speaking the words of the Owl?"

cried the chief, harshly, with a suspicious glance at her.

"I will do what I can," she answered, in the Indian tongue. "What are you, that you should teach the Queen of the Lake how and what to speak? Dare to say another word, and I will call down the curse of the spirit upon your head, and your expedition will come to naught."

The chief seemed to cower before the spirited girl, and every one saw that she had gained a great ascendancy among the simple-minded savages. She turned again to Waterman.

"Trust me," she said again. "Speak for me, you two, Gilbert and Owasco."

"Tell her," said Gilbert. "She will be true as steel, and poor Helen may need such a friend."

Waterman drew Morena aside and whispered in her ear the hiding-place of the girl, and she nodded, intimating that she understood. "I am going now," she said. "At early dusk they will attack you, and you will have to fight hard to beat them off. If you do not succeed, I will give you my promise that no harm shall come to the beautiful woman in the tree."

"Noble girl!" said Waterman. "Is it not horrible that such a life as this should be wasted in the midst of a savage tribe?"

"Not altogether wasted," she said, quietly. "Those good people who taught me what I know of civilization and religion also told me that the time is not lost which is spent in making better and purer even the lowest creatures from God's hand. I cannot hope in my generation to make my chosen people throw aside their old prejudices and customs, but I can at least teach them to be less vindictive and less in love with the old Jewish law, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.'"

"You are a Christian, then," said Waterman, completely nonplussed at the purity of her language and the fine feeling she displayed. "Those good people who educated you taught you that, too!"

"I was the more ready to imbibe the doctrine because there flows in my veins a mixture of the white man's blood. Some day I may tell you more of myself, but not now, for the Owl looks at me suspiciously, and I would not make him angry at me, for he has been kind to me."

"Come away," said the chief. "I scent blood in the air, and the eagles of the tribe are gathering. Say to these men that an Indian never forgets nor forgives, and that the time will come when all here shall repent the insults which have been put upon me."

Morena repeated his words.

"Stay, black dog of a Wyandot, stay! If a woman of the Onondagas called, you would turn back, so listen to the speech of one who has taken scalps. You hold the secret of my friend and brother, and we will live to tear it out of your heart," cried Owasco.

The Owl answered by a look of hatred, but said not a word. Morena followed him into the canoe, and as the light craft was shoved away, she waved them a gesture of farewell.

CHAPTER V.

A BRAVE DEED—A NEW PERIL.

HELEN, while the white men were busy on the island, was cooped up in the heart of the sycamore, facing the mighty beast, who had just struck the weapon from her hand. She snatched up a pistol and placing it close to the ear of the great brute, pulled the trigger. In that narrow space the report sounded like thunder, and the smoke rolled slowly upward toward the opening at the top. She caught up the other pistol, fully expecting an assault, and had offered up a mental prayer for deliverance, when she was aware that the bear was gone. Peeping down from the lofty perch, she became conscious that the brute lay in a heap at the foot of the sycamore, with the blood running in a purple stream from his ears. Providence directed that shot, and through the ear of her huge enemy it had passed into the brain, and he lay dead at the bottom of the hollow, choking it up with his huge bulk. A sickening sensation passed over her as she saw the flowing blood, and realized that she had destroyed this giant foe, with the little weapon still smoking in her hand. She reeled and supported herself against the body of the tree, or she would have fallen headlong down the shaft, for, woman-like, her courage failed after the danger had passed.

The feeling lasted but a moment, and then she was herself again, and was about to descend from her perch and get out of the tree in some way, when, glancing through the peep-hole, she saw that a number of Indians had come into the glade. Living in a frontier town, she knew something of Indian costumes, and made out that these were probably Wyandots. They had halted a few yards from the tree, and she counted them and found that they numbered sixty men in all, variously armed, and presenting upon the whole a very warlike appearance. They stacked their arms in the glade and built fires, evidently intending to pass the night there, unless called away. Some lit fires, others brought fish and venison, and the younger warriors talked loudly and boastfully together,

while the elders sat and smoked their pipes under the trees. Once or twice the young braves strayed very near the hiding-place of Helen, but manifested no desire to break through the brambles, until one of their number happened to strike the fresh trail of the bear, and every one gave tongue in an instant, like hounds upon the scent, at the prospect of a bear-hunt. Even the older warriors arose and walked with stately step toward the place where the young warriors were looking at the trail and following it with bent heads.

"Ugh!" said one of the elders pointing to the tree, which his keen eye recognized as the probable resting-place of the bear. A retrograde movement on the part of the younger men told that they did not deem it necessary for them to be too forward if the bear were really so near, and they suddenly became aware of the immense breach of forest etiquette they would have been guilty of if they had taken precedence of their elders. The trail was easily followed, and parting the tangled briars carefully, the Indian leader saw the nose of the bear within half a yard of his own. With an agility which would have done honor to the most finished acrobat, the Indian threw himself backward, expecting the bear to be upon his back the next moment. But as he did not follow, he took heart, and loading their weapons, two or three of the bravest advanced, and began to maneuver to get sight of Bruin again. Three rifles exploded at the same moment, and then the Indians darted back again, with commendable caution, anticipating that Bruin would bolt out upon them with open mouth. But he lay quiet in his lair, and made no sign to show that he lived. After waiting awhile, and satisfying himself that the bear had received his quietus, the leader advanced and peeped into the hollow. There lay Bruin, his head upon his paws, and his eyes closed in death. Seizing him by the paws and ears, the savages dragged him out with triumphant shouts, and admired his huge proportions, never dreaming that the hand of a feeble girl, and not their shots, had laid the animal low. However, the fact that they had fired at it, took away all danger of their suspecting the real cause of the animal's death, and they set to work flaying the bear, preparatory to a hearty meal, while Helen sat in the tree and looked down upon them, wondering if they meant to make their camp there for the night.

All at once she became conscious of a new danger. In firing at the bear a piece of burning gun-wad had fallen upon the dry leaves at the bottom of the hollow, and a small, burning spot was visible near the place where the bear had lain, which was gradually but surely widening, and creeping toward the rotten but dry wood with which the place was lined. A smoke was beginning to rise, and it was with the greatest difficulty she restrained a cough, which would have betrayed her, for one of the Indian fires had been built within ten feet of the tree, immediately in front of the opening from which the bear had been dragged.

Owasco never dreamed, when he hid the fair girl in the tree, that she would be exposed to dangers like this, but who can tell what an hour may bring forth? It was a time for action, and quick action at that. The hatchet of the Onondaga lay at the bottom, and had not been seen by any of the Indians, in their haste to drag out the bear. Could she descend and reach it, without attracting the attention of the Indian? It must be done, or she was doomed. Stepping lightly over the shelf upon which she sat, she descended into that cloud of fire and smoke rolling up from the bottom, and reached the hatchet unperceived. The fire had now gained headway, and was soaring fearfully, and the brave girl's heart almost gave way. She might escape from the fiery death before her, but would the fate which awaited her at the hands of the Indians be preferable to that? She turned her eyes to heaven in the midst of the smoke and flame, and prayed that He in whom she put her trust might look down in pity and teach her the right way.

The men upon the island were busy strengthening their barricade, and watching for the coming of the enemy. Now and then the agent cast a quick glance at the distant tree, which enshrined the woman he loved so well, hoping that she was not frightened in the solitude in which he thought her, when the darkness began to come on, and the tree loomed vague and indistinct against the summer sky. Then, all at once, as he gazed toward it, a flame flashed before his eyes and revealed the forest all about the fatal tree. That flame poured out in a fiery flood from the opening at the crotch, seized upon the hanging twigs, ran like lightning to the top, and in an instant the great sycamore was in a blaze! The young man uttered a cry of agony, and held out his hands toward the blazing tree.

"See, see!" he cried. "Oh, my God, what have we done? Is that your safety, your haven of refuge, Gilbert? You have betrayed my darling to death, and her blood is on your head from this fatal hour."

"Hush!" said Gilbert. "She is in God's

hands, and if it is his will that she should die, what are you, that you should oppose your pitiful will to his? But I cannot believe it; she, so young, so beautiful, so brave, was not born for such a death."

"I tell you she is doomed," screamed the unhappy young man. "Why did I listen to her, why let her go away to this horrible death, because I was too cowardly to defend her?"

"Be a man, Clinton Waterman!" said Gilbert, sternly, "and do not blame those who have done their best. I said to-night that you were young; I envied you because you were happy, and had never known a great trouble. I feel now that I was wrong, and that God is about to set his mark of sorrow on you; but, still trust in Him."

"I beg your pardon, Gilbert," said the other, in a faint voice. "You are not to blame in this, but the sorrow has come too suddenly upon me, and I fear that it is more than I can bear. You do not, you cannot know how I loved that girl—how I have watched her day by day, and saw each hour a new beauty in her life which made her more glorious. She was to have been my wife, and now—See, see!"

The flames leaped and roared, and threw themselves into fantastic shapes in the dry tree-top; they climbed from limb to limb, until every part of the great tree was covered with the glow which made night as day at about it, and shed a light even upon the island.

A dead silence, like that of death, fell upon the assembled group, as they watched the progress of the devouring flames as they leaped upward, carrying destruction in their track. At last Gilbert spoke.

"We can give no help to her, at any rate, and now let us do what we can for revenge. Doubtless the hand of a vile Wyandot fired that tree, and if it did, then we live for vengeance. Get torches ready to light these beacons, for it will not be long before we are attacked."

The beacons of which he spoke were arranged upon the green turf in front of the barricades, in such a position that by lighting them a flood of light would cover the river on both sides, and reveal to them the position and plans of the enemy.

"Owasco will go and try to find out what these Wyandot dogs mean to do," said the chief. "If you hear the loon call twice and the night-owl once, you will know that they are coming. If the night-owl calls twice and the loon once, you will know that they are not yet ready."

"I do not like to have you go alone," remarked Gilbert. "What can I do without you?"

"The head of an Onondaga is better than that of a Wyandot," was Owasco's rejoinder. "I shall be safe."

"Go then, and God be with you," replied Gilbert.

Owasco stripped off everything but the breech-cloth, and dropped silently into the water, and was gone, and they waited patiently with their arms in their hands for his signal from the shore. All eyes were bent upon the burning tree, which was now nearly destroyed, and stood like a gigantic column, glowing as molten iron. No sound came from the shore, but the silence was ominous of an assault.

"Hark!" said Gilbert. The loon cried out twice and the owl hooted once.

"Get ready," said the guide. "That means business."

Snatching up a torch he applied it to one of the piles of brush; the flames began to spread, and they could see some distance from the banks. As the light became greater, they perceived that the river was dotted with logs, floating slowly but surely toward the island, and they knew that each one of these logs concealed one or more Indian heads. They had laid their weapons upon the logs, keeping them in their places by means of the knots upon the sticks.

The defenders knew that little was to be gained by wasting their powder upon men so concealed, and not a shot was fired. The river was shallow close to the island, so that they must wade some paces to reach the bank, and this was what the whites waited for.

The Indians were surprised by the sudden light thrown upon their movements, for it is an Indian trait to love darkness as a cover for his assault. Short, quick yells from those who had been left upon the bank told that they had not expected the fires, and were not at all pleased.

"I'll give one of them a taste of pure content if you give the word, Gilbert," said one of the oarsmen of the bateau. "I see his dingy back."

"Give it to them," said Gilbert. "They need a lesson."

The voyageur brought his rifle steadily to his shoulder, and a sharp crack rung through the forest. One of the foremost savages bounded half out of the water with a piercing death-cry, and floated for a moment upon the calm surface before he went down forever.

A quiet chuckle on the part of the man who had fired the shot told his satisfaction in per-

forming the exploit, as he coolly commenced reloading his rifle.

Seeing that they could no longer conceal themselves, those who had gained the shallow water bounded to their feet and rushed on to the attack. They were met by a withering fire from the rifles of the defenders, which dropped two or three dead and wounded into the water, and over their bodies their companions rushed to avenge them.

They were met by the stout barricades, which had been so carefully built, and by shots from pistols, cuts from knife and hatchet, and tremendous blows from a club wielded by the hands of the doughty descendant of the O'Driscolls, who was a host in himself.

Half-lying upon the barricade, with his body thrown forward, he struck out with a zeal and vigor that spoke well for his muscular development. A barrier of steel gleamed upon the top of the barricade, and the Indians found what it was to deal with that indomitable race whose mission is to evangelize the world, whose stern watchword in their early day was to "trust in God and keep your powder dry." Yet they had desperate work cut out for them, for the savages swarmed like bees out of the shallow water, and with knife, hatchet and war-club strove to make their way over the defenses.

Clinton Waterman was a man trained to peril in his life of an Indian agent, and as he thought that these men had perhaps been the ones who robbed his darling of her life, his arm seemed nerved with ten-fold vigor, and at every blow he struck, he murmured that young girl's name, who had that night died a martyr's death, in fire and smoke, alone in the dismal coffin in which they had enshrined her. The men of Darromed were no cowards, and fought valiantly and well, for they were the pick and choice of that fierce band, who came down from their hunting-grounds on this bloody mission, and whose deeds made them infamous in the annals of time, as long as the names of Harmar and St. Clair shall be remembered.

"They fight well," said Gilbert, between his teeth, as he fought on by the side of Waterman. "Ha! Take that you painted devil!"

Down rolled the Indian at whom he directed the blow and lay gasping at the foot of the barricade, upon the narrow strip of sand which ran along below the bank. The sturdy defense of the position began to have its effect upon the assailants, and they wavered. Some, who were half-way across the current, hesitated, and drifted slowly downward. The Owl, who had kept his position in his canoe without taking any share in the battle, though not from cowardice, now gave the signal to his paddlers, and the great canoe, holding ten of the most desperate fighters in the band, shot rapidly across the stream. Engaged with their immediate assailants, the brave men in the barricade could not pay any attention to them, and they reached the island without the loss of a single man.

"Come!" screamed the chief, "and let us give these white men to the crows, who dare to stand up against the pride of the Wyandots. Follow me, and behold how a great chief fights in the cause of his country."

"Here I am," cried Gilbert, rushing to the front. "I, who hate you, red fiend that you are. Meet me if you dare."

In an instant they closed, and standing upon the top of the barricade, joined in a duel *à l'outrance*.

The forlorn hope of the Wyandots, aiding their leader, scrambled like cats up the sides of the barricade, fighting hand to hand with the defenders. Those who had begun to waver, seeing others ready to take the first place, came on again, and the deadly struggle was resumed with greater vigor than before. Indian after Indian rolled down the bank into the water, wounded or slain, while the white men, fighting under the cover of the barricade, had as yet escaped without serious loss, and no one paid any attention to the desperate duel going on between Gilbert and his red foe.

Each had seized the other by the left wrist, leaving the right hand free and armed with the long knife, with which they cut, thrust and parried with deadly force, eluding blows which would have been fatal, with an agility and address which only rare forest training could effect.

"Ha, dog of a Yengee!" hissed the Owl. "You shall die by the knife of a warrior—you, who ought to be only whipped to death by women."

Gilbert answered by a thrust which pierced the knife-hand of the boaster, and with a cry of rage and agony, he dropped his blade and grappled with his foe. They tottered on the verge of the barricade, and fell headlong into an eddy which ran by the point of the island, and were swept out into deeper water, still locked in a deadly embrace. Gilbert had seized his opponent by the scalp-lock, and while struggling to keep above water, buried his enemy beneath the surge. But, by a convulsive effort, the Indian released himself and sunk instantly, leaving Gilbert swimming about in a bewildered manner, almost beside himself with rage.

CHAPTER VI.

A SAD SERVICE.

His angry fit passed away, and he looked about him to see what he should do next. The fire still blazed upon the island, and, balancing himself upon the water, he could see that the defenders were getting the best of it, and that the Indians, having lost their chief, were beginning to retreat, and that he would be in danger of meeting them if he tried to return. Seizing upon a floating log, he swam rapidly down-stream to be out of reach of the fugitives. He had gone some rods down before he was aware that there was a weight upon the log at the other end, and peering round it, he saw, in the dim light which the fires threw upon the water at this distance, a man clinging to the log, whose feathered headdress proclaimed him to be an Indian. They were now at the mercy of the stream which was bearing them rapidly downward, and the log whirled to and fro, sometimes with one end down the stream, sometimes the other, and Gilbert began to work cautiously downward, to get nearer the intruder upon his property, as he considered the log to be.

It was plain that the savage knew that he had a *compagnon du voyage*, and did not care about it, for he raised his head now and then to get a glimpse of him. It happened just then that they struck a shallow, and the two men sprung up and rushed at each other with deadly intent.

"You sneaking dog!" roared Gilbert. "I hate your nation, father and son, and you shall go down."

"Gilbert?" cried the well-known voice of Owasco. "Stop!"

"It's lucky I spoke," said the Guide. "I might have hurt you or you might have finished me, and I hope we love each other too well to do that. Come, let us make for the island, and rejoin our friends, who will be anxious for our coming."

"Stay," said Owasco. "Is the knife of my brother red, and has it drank deep of the blood of the enemy?"

"Deeper than you think, perhaps," replied Gilbert. "It was a hard battle, but we beat them off with but little loss, or at least they were wavering when I fell into the water, grappling with my inveterate foe, Darromed. Since then the shouts I have heard have told me that our side has been victorious."

"Then listen to the words of Owasco. My heart is very sad, and I cannot rest until I know that the white maiden, fair as a lily, is dead in the burning tree. Let us go together, in spite of the Wyandot dogs, and find her bones and give them burial, or save her if they have taken her captive."

"I pray God that they may," replied Gilbert, "although their tender mercies are cruel, for it seems so horrible that one so young, so beautiful, should meet such a fearful death. There is my hand, Owasco; and we will go together upon this holy duty, and may the God we both worship aid us in our task."

Gilbert had kept his knife, which he replaced in its sheath, and then, side by side, they stepped into the water and pushed out for the shore, swimming where the water was deep enough, and wading where it was shallow, and they were soon clinging to the bushes under the overhanging bank and listening for something which might guide them to the position of their enemies. Not a sound was heard save at times the cry of some aquatic bird plunging into the water, or the leap of a great fish from its surface. They began to think that they must have landed far below their enemies, and drawing themselves up with caution, they ascended the bank and lay prostrate, listening intently for the slightest noise. The night was intensely dark, and lying as they did upon the bank and peeping under the bushes, the guide caught the glimmer of a fire far up the stream. Then they understood that they had drifted much further down than they had at first imagined, and were far out of the reach of the red-skins.

Taking Owasco by the hand, the guide began to tread onward through the woods in silence, until they saw, just in front, a towering column of fire jetting up in the darkness. That column was the giant sycamore in which Owasco had hidden Helen. They crept up cautiously, and as they did so, the column tottered, reeled blindly in empty space, and fell with a thundering crash, sending up a column of mingled smoke and flame as it crushed into a hopeless mass of ruins. One look was sufficient for them to understand that long before the fate of Helen had been decided, whether for captivity or death, but they ran up to the blazing mass and searched about among it with poles they had picked up, until they found—horrible sight!—a human skeleton, the flesh burned from the bones, and those bones white as chalk. The horrible sight robbed both these strong men of their strength for a moment, and they covered their faces with open hands, before they could nerve themselves to the task before them.

Then separating the bones from the burning embers of that vast sepulchral urn, they scooped a shallow grave in the soft earth and laid them there, well knowing that it was not

in their power to give them a better burial, but upon the tree under which the grave was made the Guide made a rude cross, with the date of the sad occurrence.

"Lie thou there, young martyr to savage hate and guilt," murmured the Guide. "I, a stained man, guilty of malice and revengeful thoughts, cannot breathe a prayer above thy remains; I am not worthy; but your grave will yet be hallowed by the tears of love. I feel it due to you and your purity to shed these tears, but I cannot pray for you. There, Owasco, let us go and tell this sad news to Waterman. It will break his heart."

As he rose from his knees, as he had bent beside the grave, he caught a glimpse of a dark face peering from the bushes. Then came a horrible yell, and the savages poured upon them from every side, armed to the teeth and thirsting for their blood. Slightly armed as they were, the resistance they made was superhuman, and in shorter space than it has taken to set it down, three souls had gone to judgment. But what could they do among so many? Gilbert saw that all hope was gone, and dragging away two men who clung like cats to the person of Owasco, he shouted to him to run.

"I cannot leave you," shouted the Onondaga, striking down an Indian with his knife. "Let us die together."

"Fly," gasped Gilbert, struggling with his enemies. "You may aid me, *free*; you can only die, as a prisoner."

Owasco struck right and left, broke through the circle of his enemies and escaped into the darkness, with a dozen painted demons yelling at his heels. Gilbert was knocked down, kicked, and bruised, and dragged away to the woods and down to the river bank, where in an open space beside the stream, a fire had been built. They bound their captive to a sapling, and then Darromed came forward.

"Listen, white dog and fool," he cried. "What were you, that you should measure strength with so great a chief as I? Does not your heart turn to water in your breast when you think of the fate before you? Many of my braves have fallen by the island in the river, and the brothers of the slain have sworn to send some white man to bear a torch before their ghosts as they pass the silent river which borders the happy hunting-ground. We will send you, dog of the base heart."

"You know me," hissed Gilbert, "and you can swear I am not a coward. It grieves me to leave my mission unfulfilled, but I am ready to die if it is God's will. Do your worst, for I defy you, and long to hear the fire burn which will consume me."

"No," said the chief. "Perhaps you will not die by fire. Who can tell what pangs we will make you suffer before you give your last groan? Where is the white girl who was in the boat in the morning?"

"She is dead," said Gilbert, solemnly. "Your vengeance cannot reach her now, for she is out of the darkness and into the light of God. Pure and unstained, her soul has gone to her Maker, and it was in the holy duty of burying her remains that you took me. Do not think that I am going to whine and beg for my life from such a wretch as you are. I should scorn myself if I could be guilty of that, so call your demons and let them gather round me, and see if I cannot die as becomes a man who has fought well for his country, and whose life has been but a weary load."

Living so long among Indians, Gilbert had imbibed many of their notions. He had learned to boast a little in the face of an enemy, to insult the men who tied him to the stake, and to laugh in the face of death. But, with all that, he had a simple faith in God and an unswerving purpose which was wonderful, and set him high above the ordinary sons of men. He had worked all through life with a purpose as yet unfulfilled, and his death would end all his hopes, yet a man of his firm nature could look with a smile even upon this chance. Something in the calm serenity of the man awed the savage, and he looked fixedly upon his captive.

"You have the soul of a warrior," he said, quietly, "and will meet your death like a man. We are but poor Indians, and it will make our hearts glad to see such a man die. I leave you, because there is work for us before you meet your death."

"What is this?" said a quiet voice at his elbow, and he turned with a start. Morena stood in the firelight, which covered her as with a glory, and revealed her tranquil face and regal head.

"Has the Queen of the Lake come again to sing in the ears of the Owl?" said the Indian, in a submissive tone. "The heart of the chief is glad, for he feared that he would never see her again, since she left us in anger."

"Morena cannot be long angry with the Wyandot," she answered. "She has lived with them long and they have brought her up from a little child, until this time, when she walks the woods in safety. But a chief should be careful how he makes the heart of Morena sad, or some day she will leave the tribe, never to return."

"That would be a sad day to the Wyandot," said the chief. "Since you have left us, we

have lost many braves, for the white men in the island fight as if they held within their breasts the spirits of the rocks and trees, evil beings who teach them where to strike. But one, the man who struck me down, who held me by the throat and disgraced me in the eyes of the tribe and his own friends, is here, and he shall die."

"McKay would give much wealth for this man," said Morena. "Come, let us sell him, and get many muskets and powder and ball, with blankets to keep us warm in winter."

"Darromed is rich; he does not need any of these things," said the chief.

"It is true, as you say," replied Morena. "Darromed, the Horned Owl of the Wyandots, is very rich in weapons and blankets, but does he care nothing for those who are poor?"

"Let them buy for themselves if they need these things, for Darromed will not give up his revenge for them."

"But McKay spoke in my ear when we last met, and said that this man held secrets which would aid the Indians and avenge those who are dead. We loved them; they were good men and fought nobly for their nation, and we should do something for their memory. Let us take this man then, and give him to McKay, that he may sing in his ear the song which he longs so much to hear."

"Morena," said Darromed, "you speak your words in ears which are deaf, and cannot hear what you say. When I would listen, I hear heavy blows and see a chief of the Wyandots fall to the ground, with the hand of a white man on his throat. I have spoken; Darromed cannot lie."

"There, little girl," said the Guide, kindly, speaking in the English tongue, "no doubt you mean well, but it is of no use to talk to that flinty-hearted monster, who is hankering after my blood, and I don't see how I can blame him. I've chased him like a bloodhound for twelve years, I killed his brother and his uncle, and I would have ended him long ago but that he holds the secret which is so dear to me. I reckon my turn has come to go, and if it has, I'm not the man to worry about it."

"I will aid you yet," she said, in the same language. "Keep up a good heart and trust in me."

The Indians were evidently getting ready for a move, and were eagerly rushing up and down the banks, pausing now and then to cast a look of furious anger at the prisoner, whom they blamed in a great measure for the injuries they had received. The island was now dark, as the fires had gone out, and what the white men were doing it was impossible to say. The Indians had constructed a raft with a high front, which when light would float in a foot of water. The front was three feet high, and thirty men could crowd upon the structure and it would uphold them. The design was to push this close up to the island, and then leap from the high top to the barricade. This was, of course, to be occupied by the bravest of the warriors, and while they assailed the position in front the others were to cross, as before, by the aid of the logs.

"They will go away," said Morena. "After that I have something to tell you."

Darromed had been looking at her suspiciously, and seeing her speak to the prisoner he called out four of his best men, and gave them secret instructions. To the surprise and anger of Morena they stalked up to the tree to which Gilbert was bound and took their position to watch him, and when Morena would have spoken to him again they ordered her back. The look which they received made them quail a little, for they had great faith in her power, but they were subservient to the orders of the chief and had his commands.

"What does this mean?" cried the girl, advancing quickly to the side of Darromed. "Is Morena a child to be told to do this and not to do that? Look, I will have your answer, Darromed. Do you say I shall not speak to the prisoner?"

"I will speak," replied Darromed, in a low voice. "It will not be well with you if the prisoner escapes from the post, for, much as the Wyandots love you, they would not endure that, for this man's hands are red with the life-blood of their kinsmen. Shall all this blood be shed in vain, Queen of the Lake? No, I make reply, and who has the better right to say it, you, who are a woman and no warrior, or Darromed, the Horned Owl, a chief of the tribe?"

"Am I a traitress to the great nation?" she demanded. "When I asked you to sell the white man to McKay, I spoke for the good of the tribe, because this wealth which we might all share would be better than a dead dog. Enough; I will not stay with you, since I am no longer to be trusted, but will go to my home beyond the hills to the east and see you no more."

Darromed was evidently uneasy, for the tribe would not deal kindly with him if their queen left them by his fault. But, something told him that she wished to save the man he hated from death, and he was armed against it, while he determined to keep her with him.

"You cannot leave the tribe," he cried, sternly. "You belong to the tribe, and who would go back to the fathers and say, we left the queen in the wood below the Miami, because she parted from us in anger? You must stay."

A flood of angry red rushed in an instant to the cheek of the maiden, and throwing her hand back, she unslung by one quick motion the carbine which hung at her back, and pointed it at the breast of the chief, who started back in confusion and alarm.

"Do you dare to stop me?" she cried. "Morena, the Queen of the Lake, will walk the woods alone, and no man shall dictate to her."

The chief made a motion to advance again, but the flash in the beautiful eyes of Morena warned him to desist.

"Lay the weight of a finger on me if you dare, chief of the Wyandots. I am not like the women of your tribe, who bend humbly when you bid them bow the knee; neither have you the power to control me. I will not stay here if I like to go, and there is no power which you can wield which will force me to do it."

The ringing defiance in her tones awed the chief, and he stood staring blankly at her, his copper-colored face turning to a dirty white in his wrath.

She stood with one foot a little advanced, her proud lip curling defiantly, her eyes flashing fire, and everything in her attitude betraying a sublime defiance. One hand was on the lock of her weapon, and the chief knew better than to tempt her too far, and he began to temporize.

"Why is the queen wroth at the chief?" he said. "Can she blame him because he would keep her in the tribe?"

"I must come and go as I will," replied Morena, defiantly. "Do you agree to that?"

"Yes," replied Darromed, sullenly, "but you shall not speak to the prisoner. It is spoken, and I will not change my words at your bidding. Come around me, warriors of the Wyandot, and let us sweep these white dogs into the river."

The raft pushed out from the bank, and in silence and gloom moved toward the island.

CHAPTER VII.

RUNNING THE RIVER GANTLET.

THEY found nothing but an empty barricade, a few broken weapons scattered here and there, but the bateau was gone. In the darkness, directly after it became certain that the Guide and Owasco would not return, they had pushed out the bateau, guided only by a single paddle, which dropped noiselessly into the water in the hands of a skilled voyageur. Clinton Waterman lay in the bow, his head upon his hands, given up completely to despair, and it is no shame to his manhood to say that the tears trickled through his fingers. He felt that he had lost the better half of his life.

Helen Carlyon was the daughter of a major serving in the army of Wayne, at present far in the rear, hurrying up troops. He had an estate upon the Ohio, but had taken his daughter with him into the disturbed territory, because he had no time to take her to the settlement, and he felt that she would be safer with the army.

When scarcely twenty miles separated him from the army, there came an express from Wayne, ordering him back to Fort Defiance, one of a chain they had been building in the Indian country. Clinton Waterman, the Indian agent, and the betrothed of Helen, undertook to convey her safely to the camp of Wayne. News of a rising among the Indians had come to them from time to time, but those they had met had acted in a friendly manner, and they were completely deceived, until Gilbert warned them of their danger.

"You must git up, Mr. Waterman," said the voyageur who was steering. "I know how hard it is to lose a friend like that, but you are not alone in sorrow. Many another man has suffered by the hell-hounds whom the English are inciting to deeds of blood, but we live on after it, hoping for revenge. Be a man, and help us down the rapids, for I'd sooner go down than trust myself on shore, for I doubt the chief has lined the banks with Injins."

"You are right, Merritt," said Waterman, raising his head. "I will no longer give myself up to despair, but will live to avenge myself upon the infamous wretches who have robbed me of my darling. You shall have no reason to complain of me from this hour, for I swear death to all who bear the name of Wyandot."

The river shoaled rapidly from this point and was full of rocks protruding from the water and making their downward course very dangerous. As if to aid them when such aid was useless, the moon struggled out from the thick clouds which had up to this time shrouded it, and shed a brilliant light upon the scene. They saw the overhanging banks, the rocky heights, and the water boiling down amid the rocks, but under the practiced hand of Merritt, they glided safely on. The roar sounded louder and louder in their ears, and Merritt, by a quick motion of his hand, whirled the bateau into an eddy close to the bank, and whistled the

bar of a popular tune. It was answered from the bank, and they heard voices, and a dozen men, wearing the green coats of the Kentucky rangers, leaped down upon the beach from hiding-places in the banks.

"Who comes there?" cried a firm, manly voice.

"Clinton Waterman and party, from Defiance," replied Merritt. "Is the wagon ready?"

"All right," said the man who acted as spokesman. "Get ashore as quickly as you can, for my boys say that the red niggers are out to-night. Which is Clinton Waterman? I give you good-day, and hope you have not suffered any inconvenience in your passage from Defiance."

"The worst," replied the young captain. "Whom have I the honor of addressing?"

"Lieutenant John Mack, of the 'Kentucky Rangers.' I am happy to meet an officer of such reputation, as my friends Rodgers and Payne both speak in high terms of you. I have never had the honor of meeting you before."

"Thank you, Lieutenant Mack. But this is not a time for compliments. There are many Indians in the immediate vicinity, and they may take it into their heads to assail us in crossing the portage."

"Right, sir. Bring up that wagon, Bixby, and be careful that you make no noise. Take hold here, the rest of you, and drag this bateau out of the water. There is no time to lose."

John Mack was a man of middle age, strongly built, with a quiet determination in his face which was an index of the man's character, and he was already beginning to make himself known by his deeds all along the border, from Detroit to Niagara. The Americans maintained at this point a dilapidated fort, to store wagons with which goods and bateaus were transported across the portage to the river below the upper rapids.

When it came up, the men ranged themselves upon each side of the heavy bateau and raising it bodily from the ground with all it contained, pushed it upon the wagon and secured it in its place. The road over which they passed was through a marshy ground along the bank. It was made of round logs, laid side by side upon the soft earth—a rough causeway for an invalid to pass over in a heavy wagon.

The party divided, and marched in two sections, behind and before the wagon. Waterman and Mack marched side by side in front.

"What did you mean by saying that you had trouble coming down, sir?" asked the latter. "I understood that you were to bring down Carlyon's daughter to the army, and all the youngsters are on the *qui vive* to see her, for her reputation for wonderful beauty has gone before her. Lucky fellow! You are ahead of them there, if all tales are true."

"Hush, for Heaven's sake!" said Waterman, stifling a sob. "You do not know the terrible calamity I have to tell you, and it is almost beyond my strength to speak of it. I did start to bring Helen Carlyon with me, but never shall those who love her look upon her dear face again. I will try to relate the sad story, but I am afraid I shall break down in the attempt."

"Don't try it then," said the young soldier. "You have only to say, 'She is gone,' and there will be mourning in every fort from Cincinnati to Detroit, for we love her father well, and a comrade's children are dear to us for his sake."

"You speak so kindly that you give me strength to explain," said Waterman, and mustering courage he told all the sad story, from the first meeting with the Guide in the forest to the escape of the bateau. He told the heroism of the Guide and how he fell into the stream, locked in the embrace of Darromed, and was not seen again—of the burning tree, in which the girl he loved so well was hidden, and the fiery death she met. A bitter execration from the lips of Mack ended the tale.

"And so she is gone, poor girl," he murmured. "I can't think of it without a buzzing in my head and a fire in my heart. The loveliest girl in the North-west driven to her death by those red hounds, whom may Heaven blast forever! And that brave Guide, the best scout in this section, gone, too. Gilbert the Guide, a man of many sorrows, whom we all loved so well. Where was Owasco all this time?"

"He went ashore to apprise us of the attack, and did so."

"Do you think he is gone, too?"

"I fear so."

"There it is, then; the two best men for tracking Indians to be found anywhere sent to their long home in a single night. Don't say any more about it, for it makes my blood boil. Those two men have stood by me in battle many a time, and never failed me yet, and now that they should end like this! I'd make the country round about the Miami too hot for the Wyandots, if I could have my way."

"Look out!" cried a man who had been sent ahead to scout. "Injins!"

"Tree, boys!" yelled Mack, assuming the trained Indian fighter in an instant. "Hurray! Give it to them if they show their ugly heads."

Detaching the horses quickly, they waited, partly under cover of the huge wagon, with the towering height behind them, for the coming of the Indians. They could only come in one way, and that was by the "corduroy road," over which the wagon had passed, for the swamp was full of water, and it was as much as a man's life was worth to attempt its passage. On they came, knowing nothing of the accession of strength which the force of Waterman had received, looking like demons in the moonlight, until the sharp crack of a dozen rifles told them that they had no common foe to deal with. The wagon filled up the entire width of the road, and there was a deep black pool on each side, so that the rangers were as secure as in a fortress. One volley was enough, and the red-skins faded away as suddenly as if they had sunk into the earth, and in two minutes after the first assault, the enemy were gone, with the exception of two or three who lay stark and stiff upon the logs of the bridge, where they had dropped under the deadly weapons of the rangers. Some of the more hot-headed of the men would have pursued, but were called back by Mack.

"Want to get into an ambush, you chaps?" said he in an angry tone. "When I want you to chase Indians I'll give the order, but as it is, you hitch up the horses and let's be off. It's getting hot along the Miami, when the blamed rascals dare to assail the rangers so close to a fort. I think I can see through a board with a hole in it, though; they mean mischief somewhere else, and have sent these rascals down to keep us busy."

The horses were once more attached to the wagon, and they proceeded on their course and reached the river without further trouble. The men who had made the attack were a part of the force which Darromed had stationed down the river, and who had been called down by the signal of a scout. The bateau was once more embarked, and then Mack pulled his own out of the nook in which it was hidden and they floated on under the light of the moon, until they saw, just in front, the lights of a camp-fire glowing against the bright blue sky.

CHAPTER VIII.

A GOOD ENEMY.

DARROMED came back from the island furious at the escape of his enemies and determined to wreak his vengeance on the man whom he considered to blame for all the trouble they had encountered. He knew that his plans had been well laid, and but for his interference the party would have readily fallen into the net he had spread for them. His dark, saturnine countenance lighted up with rage as he gazed upon the undaunted Guide, who remained bound to the tree, with the green withes with which they had bound him cutting into his flesh, and actually a smile upon his face. He knew that he was doomed, that nothing earthly would in all probability save him from the wrath of Darromed, yet he smiled.

Why?

Because his heart was pure. True, in his "trade of war, he had slain men," but he could say that he never had done it wantonly. The Indians had gathered the bodies of their slain and were laying them in a ghastly row upon the earth, their smeared and wounded faces looking up to the summer sky. Around these bodies the survivors sat down and were crooning out a doleful chant, in praise of the slain and in condemnation of their slayers. All at once Darromed bounded to his feet and began to address them in the Wyandot tongue.

"Brothers of the great tribe," he said. "Listen to the words of your chief, who comes before you with a weeping heart. You who know me, ye braves of the tribe, bear ye testimony that I have often gone out to battle in your cause and have brought home many scalps, which hang on the pole of my wigwam, that the young children who dwell in my lodge may see them and become strong of heart. I brought away from the Wyandot lodges the flower of the tribe, but now behold how many of them are gone to the spirit land. I will call them by their names. Kasso! He does not hear. Mattawan! His ears are dumb. Dakotah, Eganano, Pelatah, Hassa-Nemo, Kanondah; let me hear your voices, and my heart will be glad. I will wait and see if any of these will rise at the call of their chief."

He paused and the assembly held their breath, as if anxiously awaiting for the dead men to answer to their names. The fearful silence struck like a chill to the heart of the prisoner, for he knew to what all this tended. It meant death to him, when they had finished their duty to the dead. The face of Darromed became transfigured from the expression of sorrowful surprise it had worn while calling upon his dead warriors to that of fearful rage.

"Why do they not speak, these gallant warriors? When was the time when they refused to rise at the call of the mighty chief, who has so often led them to battle? What is this which I see upon their faces and on their naked bosoms, making dim the totem of their tribes? Alas, it is blood; these brave men are slain, and where are the men who have done this fatal wrong?"

Let us bury them as become chiefs and warriors, and then dig out the hearts from their slayers who cannot find a place on the earth to hide from the wrath of the Wyandot."

They rose together and walked in solemn silence thrice about the dead. Then Darromed again set up the chant and the band took up the wild lament and sent it echoing through the forest. That long, low, tremulous wail had sounded before in the ears of the Guide, when, gliding at night beside still lake or mountain stream, he had brought down an enemy and left him for his foes to pick up and raise the death-wail, as they sung it now beside the mangled bodies of the slain.

They set to work with hatchets, knives, and sticks cut down and sharpened, to dig a grave in which to lay the dead. It was a shallow trench ten feet long, in which they laid them down to rest beside the silent river, side by side, their weapons beside them, and their blankets wrapped about them, as if they were asleep. A species of fascination drew the gaze of the prisoner to the row of bronzed and bloody faces in the pit, as they lay together, staring up toward the clouds with open eyes. Upon one face in particular his eyes were fixed intently, that of a diminutive, dwarfed specimen of humanity, shot through the heart. There was such a hideous joy expressed upon his dead face, such a complete triumph, that Gilbert could not resist the feeling that this man had been unhappy, and that it was a pleasure to him to go down to death upon the wings of the battle.

They threw the earth back upon those mangled forms and collected stones from the banks around and built a cairn, seven feet wide and ten feet long, to mark the spot where those bones were laid. When it was done and the last obsequies paid to the memory of their friends, Darromed arose, and followed by his band, formed a circle about the bound man, with an expression upon their faces which it was impossible to mistake.

"Look upon him," yelled the chief. "Behold how he laughed as we buried our dead out of sight beside the river of the Miami, the river they loved so well! They must rest far from the place where their fathers' bones are laid. I will tell you what to do for them, sons of the Wyandot."

"What shall we do?" cried the band in chorus. "We listen for the words of our chief."

Darromed advanced and laid his finger upon the breast of the bound man, and facing about, made a commanding gesture to his men.

"We will try the temper of this man," he said, "and we will see what sort of a brave he can be who has the blood of the white man in his veins. Set up a war-post and raise the cry and we will try him, whether he be a great brave or a coward."

That meant torture, and torture of the kind in which only an Indian could indulge who has been trained to invent most cruel torments and be applauded for the deed. They cut off the top of a small sapling which stood in the center of the glade, and lopped off the limbs close to the trunk. To this they bound Gilbert, whose calm face did not change. He knew that the first torments, though annoying and trying to the nerves, were never meant to take away life. They began with knife-throwing. Standing about ten feet from the tree, with the glare of the moonlight and the fire shining full upon the face of the Guide, Darromed took his knife by the point and suddenly throwing his foot forward, lanced it at the head of Gilbert. The bright weapon turned twice in the air, and remained quivering in the tree, not two inches from the right ear of the Guide. He began to debate whether it would not be better to throw his head to one side and allow the next knife to pierce his brain, when the next warrior made his throw, planting a knife in the tree upon the other side of the head, and it remained there, making it impossible for him to move his head more than two or three inches to either side.

They now began to throw at his body and limbs, evidently trying how close they could come to him without wounding him. The knives of some of the younger and less experienced would sometimes touch him, and inflict a slight wound, but nothing serious, at which the more successful laughed. The hatchet-throwing then began, and in this, as the other, Darromed showed himself worthy of being ranked high in the tribe. Gilbert had borne it all with a patient smile upon his face, which roused the anger of Darromed, but he masked it as only an Indian can, and advanced with a look of humility which no one could assume better than himself.

"My brother will forgive me if I made a mistake. I thought he was a cowardly dog, like the rest of the white men, and that he would cry like a child when the knives touched him. But I am glad to find that he is a warrior, and can bear pain bravely. I am only a poor Indian, and do not know many good ways to make pain, but my brother will excuse me, because I can only do what I have been taught. All we have done so far has not damped the courage of my brother, for I saw him smile."

"It does not even amuse me," said Gilbert.

"If you can think of nothing better than this, I am ashamed of you, for an Onondaga child four years old could do better."

"Doubtless my brother says true," replied Darromed, with a latent fire in his black eyes. "An Onondaga child must be very wise, because they become such great men. Some might say that it was cowardly for Owasco to run away, and leave his friend in the hands of the Wyandots, but they would be fools, for it is better to save your own life than that of a friend."

"Owasco is no coward," replied the Guide, indignantly. "Some of your men in yonder grave would attest it, if they could speak. Many a head that would wear its hair to-day is robbed of its ornament because Owasco roamed the forest. Take any four men of the Wyandot nation, yourself included if you like, and give Owasco room enough to work free, and he will whip you all."

"Liar!" screamed the Indian, losing his self-possession. "Owasco dare not strike hatchets with Darromed for his life."

"Pshaw!" said Gilbert, who saw that he had touched him upon a tender point, and hoped to incense him to end all at once. "That is nonsense. In my opinion, you would be but a straw in the hands of Owasco, who would break you into pieces."

Twice during this speech the chief half bared his knife, and as many times plunged it back again, as the insults of the white man touched him closer.

"For my part," continued the Guide, with great apparent candor, "I never could see any particular use to be made of a Wyandot. They are a low-lived, sneaking, cowardly race, and it would be a good thing if a pestilence should sweep them from the face of the earth. I've done something to wipe them out, and so has Owasco, and if they'll leave us alone this season, we will finish them up."

"Liar and fool!" again shrieked the angry chief. "There is no man in the Onondaga nation who can cope with the meanest Wyandot in battle. They are dogs, and the sons of dogs, who say it. But you, who have dared to lie about the great tribe, do you know what your fate will be? You shall suffer all the torments of which the priests speak in their talks to the people at the Wyandot lodges—and then you shall die."

"I am ready."

"See if you will be ready when the flames curl up about your body and the laugh of the Indian rings in your ears. When the skin slips from the flesh, the flesh cleaves from the bone, under the terrible flame. I think I hear you, in the midst of the torments, crying for water, when no one will give it you. This is one death you may die, but I will give you a choice."

"Go on with your demon work."

"I told you that we were poor Indians, who cannot think of many things. This is the next: we can bend down two strong young trees and tie your arms to the branches, and let them go. If the trees are strong enough, you will be dragged limb from limb; if they are not, you will remain in fearful torture until you die."

"Fiend, devil, do your worst!" shouted the Guide. "I defy you."

"There is another plan. We can find a place where the water drops from the rocks upon the earth below. We can tie you where it will drop upon your head. At first it will be pleasant, and you will laugh at the punishment. But soon the head will ache and needles of fire will pierce your brain until you will cry out for the tomahawk to release you. Here you will howl away your life at last, in deadly torture."

Gilbert was silent now, and seemed to pay no heed to the savage words of his tormentor, who dwelt with pleasure upon his programme of tortures.

"There is another way," he continued. "It is not a new one, but it is not one an Onondaga child would use, or a woman of the pale-faces. They bring four strong young horses of the West and tie the prisoner to them by the arms and legs, when the warriors burn them with fiery brands, and they spring away tearing the bound man into pieces. But this is common and too quick; I would not use it."

Gilbert remained with bent head and his lips fixed in the same smile. All at once he lifted his head and thundered out these words, which are in themselves a prophecy—"I know that my Redeemer liveth, and because He lives, I shall live also!"

The Indian started back, as those words of Holy Writ were thundered forth. There was something in them so grand and impressive that they went to his very soul, and he could not help admiring the man who spoke them. But his surprise was only momentary, and then the old cruel smile came back to his face.

"There is another way which I like well, and that is to bind a man to a naked rock in a pathless mountain, where the sun beats and the floods cannot come, and he will cry in vain for food and drink. Even the wolves cannot be merciful and destroy there. I must have time to think which death I shall give you, unless

the braves are too eager for their revenge. What say you, brothers of the tribe: you have heard my words, what shall be done with this man?"

"Let him feel the fire," cried the Indians, as with one breath. "We hear our brothers call us from beyond the sky."

"It is good!" cried the chief. "As my brothers say, so it shall be, for what am I that I should resist the will of so many? See, we have set up a stake, and now we will pile fagots about it and burn him with fire."

"No!" cried a clear voice. "You shall not burn him! Cowards, stand back and give me passage."

To their surprise the Indians were parted by a strong arm, and a noble-looking young Englishman, with a sword in his hand, broke through the crowd and pushed the chief back. Close behind him came Morena, her handsome face flushed and her eyes flashing.

"Hah! Why do you come here into the camp of the Wyandots and take revenge out of the hands of the tribe?"

"Because I choose to do so," replied the young man, promptly.

He was over six feet high, wearing the dress of a civilian, with a black belt about his waist holding a sword scabbard and a pair of silver-mounted pistols. His swarthy face bespoke Southern blood, and his haughty look proclaimed him to be of an aristocratic race. His mouth was small and his teeth firm and even, and his eyes dark and expressive. The hand which grasped the sword-hilt was small as that of a woman, and his foot was covered by a dainty boot, which few men of his height could have worn. He was evidently a person of authority among the Indians, for most of them shrank back, while only one or two beside the chief seemed to think of resistance to the authority of the white man.

"Look you, chief," he continued. "I have told you before now that this work must cease, and by my life it shall. We have had enough maledictions upon our cause before now for these deeds, and it shall no longer be made odious, as far as we are concerned. What has the man done that you should treat him so roughly?"

"Will you take him out of our hands?" said the chief, in a tone of suppressed bitterness. "Think what you do, Gandelion. There is no man who walks the woods who has done more to injure us than Gilbert, the Guide."

"Is this Gilbert, the Guide?" said the man called Gandelion, looking more closely at the prisoner. "Then there is only the more reason why he should be saved, for McKay has said to me again and again that he would give much to be able to question him in regard to certain subjects which need elucidation. You will therefore set him free at once and give him up to me."

"Never!" hissed the chief. "This man has killed Wyandots and he shall suffer for it, and no man, not even McKay himself, shall tear him from me. I have sworn to set him shoulder deep in the earth, with bread and water before him, there to howl away his life, and I will do it."

"Do you rebel then?" said the young man, in a sharp, quick tone. "Dare you use your influence against the authority of McKay, vested in me? Speak, quick; I have no time to spare."

Darromed ground his teeth and looked about at his men, to see how many of them would stand by him if he persisted in his defiance of this gallant man, who had ventured alone into the midst of a fierce band of savages, thirsting for revenge. They were evidently vacillating between their fear of the wrath of the English and their bloody design. Gandelion saw that it was time to act, and making a sudden leap, he placed his sword-point at the throat of the chief, while his left hand was wreathed in the buck-skin of his hunting-shirt at the shoulder.

"Stand, bloody-minded wretch, and do not dare to speak or you are dead," he cried. "Back, Wyandots, if you love your chief, for the first man who lifts a hand or draws a weapon, gives the signal for his death."

A panic spread through the Indian ranks as they saw the perilous position of their chief. Their trembling hands dropped their half-raised weapons in confusion and dismay, and they looked from him to Morena, who held a little silver bugle in her hand.

"Shall I call them?" she said.

"Sound!" replied Gandelion.

CHAPTER IX.

THE AMPHITHEATER FASTNESS.

She raised the bugle to her lips and blew a clear bird-call, which ran in silvery echoes through the forest, and was answered by the rocks around. Hardly had it broken upon the still air of night, when they heard the tread of many feet, and a well-appointed company of white men, guided by an Indian of the Shawnee nation, broke through the bushes behind them and poured into the glade. Gandelion released his captive with a swing which sent him reeling to the earth, with a muttered ejaculation of wrath and hatred, for he saw that

all hope of vengeance upon Gilbert, the Guide, was gone for the present. The young citizen turned and cut the green withes which bound Gilbert to the stake, but his paralyzed limbs refused to bear his weight, and he sunk helpless to the earth.

"Are you hurt?" said Gandelion, quickly.

"Not in the least," replied Gilbert, "but I have been tied up so long that I must rub a little life into these legs before I can use them."

The young man sat down by him and began to chafe his limbs with his hand until the circulation was restored, while Gilbert was looking furtively at the men who had come to his aid. From their dress it was impossible to say who or what they were, for they were clad in all costumes, from that of the Grenadier Guards to the buckskin garments of the voyageur. They appeared to be of various nations, Half-breeds, English, German and Irish. A smile passed over the face of Gandelion as he saw the puzzled look on the face of the Guide.

"You are looking at my men," he said, "and trying to find out in what service they are. That is a harder job than you are equal to just now, I'm inclined to think. Let it satisfy you that I have saved you from a barbecue, and say no more about it. How do you feel?"

"I can stand now, thanks to you," replied Gilbert. "As to who you are, do not think I am so little acquainted with the able men of this country, as to hesitate for a moment. If you will allow me, I will give you your rank in your ear."

Gandelion inclined his head, and Gilbert whispered a sentence at which the young man started back with a light laugh.

"Ha! You know more about me than I gave you credit for, and I will not question your sagacity by saying that you are in the wrong. Bah! what does it matter, after all, that one knows me? I am the man you name!"

A quiet smile played for a moment over the features of the Guide.

"I know your character well, sir; and this I will say, though an enemy, you are a brave man, who can be generous even to a foe. Knowing what I am, and that my whole life is given to the defeat of your cherished design, you still can treat me well."

"Perish all who make war vindictive!" replied Gandelion, quickly. "I love a man who, though an enemy, can show me that he has power. It is only to mean and little souls that I can reply in kind. But, though I hurried to aid you as soon as I knew your danger, I should not have come but for this brave girl, who came to me out of breath, in the darkness of night, at the peril of her life, to call upon me to save a white man from the stake. She knows well that I have sworn, so far as in my power lies, to give my best efforts to suppress this horrible practice upon the part of our savage allies, and she herself has saved many from the stake."

"You speak too well of me, Gandelion," said the girl, with the tears coming into her eyes. "What am I but a poor Indian girl, with but few opportunities to do good?"

"Hush!" said Gandelion, promptly. "You are great, you are noble, and have done much to humanize the Wyandots. Why do you stand there glowering at me, Darromed? You know that your infamous counsels have always gone to neutralize the good done by Morena, and you will have a heavy reckoning to pay, some day, when you atone in your own person for innocent blood."

"Speak not to me, Gandelion!" said Darromed, fiercely. "I will see whether a great chief is to be interfered with by one who—"

"Silence!" cried Gandelion. "Incense me, and I will not leave a man alive in your worse than villainous band. I know you for what you are, not for what the Wyandots think you, and if you would have me speak, I can do so."

Darromed cast a wicked look at the glowing face of this young Apollo, and was silent. For some reason he did not dare to speak, but the expression of his face was demoniac. His hand wandered unconsciously to the hilt of his knife, but the menacing eye of Gandelion was upon him, and restrained him in a moment.

"I say no more, Gandelion," he said, at last; "I will go away and seek my home, since my friends no longer need me."

"It would be far better for them and for you, if you can not do them nobler service than to burn prisoners at the stake. You understand me well enough, Darromed. I appreciate the aid of our allies, and have done all I could to secure it; but there are few among them like yourself—savage demagogues, who believe not in war, but extermination. Go, if you like; but if you remain, it must be with the understanding that prisoners must in future receive the treatment of brave but unfortunate men."

"Has Gandelion anything more to say?"

"Nothing, except that you are free to come with me if you like."

"No; I will stay upon the Miami."

"As you like. Attention, men! By the right flank, march! Gilbert, you will remain with me, and keep yourself well covered by the men, for our friends, the Wyandots, might take a

shot at you from a thicket. But first, do you give your parole?"

"For the present; but I will retract when tired of it," replied Gilbert.

"Agreed, my dear fellow. You will excuse me if I am inclined to be affectionate with you, but I admire a brave man, and you have earned that reputation nobly, in our wars."

"Thank you," said Gilbert.

Little more was said, as they marched on, side by side, through the darkness. The Shawnee was still their guide, and he knew the path well. All the allied tribes were familiar with the Miami country. They turned north along the river, crossing a bend, and the country was broken into ranges of limestone hills, increasing in size as they proceeded. Gilbert also knew the ground, for he had tramped it with Owasco a score of times, often pursued by wily and dangerous enemies.

It abounded in hiding-places which would have baffled the ingenuity of the keenest scout in the world—places which the water had carved out in the limestone rocks, making wonderful chambers, with domes and pillars, the handiwork of the great architect and artist, Nature herself. Then there were places among these rocks which only the eagle could reach if the only accessible paths were unknown, and these were so concealed by nature that it needed a keen and vigilant scout to look them out.

Toiling up the passes, over broken rocks and *debris*, under ledges, and through huge open gates, they reached, at last, a sort of amphitheater, walled in on every side but one by massive walls, and that entrance so narrow that a single man, well-armed and courageous, might have kept an army at bay, as the dauntless "Three" kept the bridge which led to Rome against the fell legions of "Lars Porsena of Clusium."

"You have chosen this position well," said Gilbert. "There is not force enough in the North-west Territory to drive you out of it."

"I thought so," said Gandelion, with his rare smile lighting up his face. "I was taught in military matters in a good school, and know how to choose a position, I think. These natural ramparts are firm enough to withstand a strong attack, I can well believe."

"You have behaved nobly with me," said Gilbert, "and I will do as much for you. There is but one weak spot in your defenses, and that I will point out to you if you would care to have me."

"Would you do that? Remember that we are enemies, and that if we meet in battle I shall assail you as if I never saw you in my life, and beat you down or capture you if I can."

"I could not expect anything else from a man who would deserve well at the hands of his country," responded Gilbert. "Come with me and I will show you something."

The men were already at work building fires and making ready for their night's rest. Gilbert took a blazing piece of knot from the nearest fire and led the way to the lower end of this strange mountain fastness, where the waters of the river lapped against the wall, made a turn, and disappeared from view behind the bastion of rock.

"Your idea was that the rocky wall extended far down the stream," said Gilbert. "If you will follow me, I will show you how wrong you are."

Stepping into the water, which was shallow close to the rock, he swung himself round the point and disappeared. Gandelion followed, and was standing upon a rock platform, eight or ten feet wide, which made a gradual ascent until it reached the level of the rock above.

"I see," said Gandelion. "A force approaching by this way could pass eight or ten desperate fighting-men round the point, who could hold their position until reinforced. The plan then would be to see that these eight or ten men did not get around the point."

"Precisely."

"I will post a strong guard here at once, and I offer you my sincere thanks for making me aware of the danger. Few men in your position, even though under an obligation, would have done so much for an enemy. There is but one way in which I can return it, and I hope the time may come when I can do it with honor. Let us go back, as I wish to post my guards."

This duty was quickly done, and the young commander and his prisoner sat down side by side.

"You seem to know a great deal about this section, Gilbert?" said Gandelion. "You will excuse my speaking so familiarly to you, but I have never heard you called by any other name."

"Nor would I have those who are my friends call me by any other," replied the Guide. "You are quite right; I know much of the Indian country, and surely I ought, for I have tramped it up and down for fifteen years, in pursuance of a vow. I cannot tell you what that vow is, but it seems as far off of fulfillment as ever. Led by a vain hope I have passed from tribe to tribe, until all men know my name, and I can speak almost every Indian

tongue beneath the northern skies. Shall I ever attain my object? I can not tell, but something whispers to me, 'Hope on; you have labored and waited, and God, who is so good and merciful, will not permit all this toil and care to be without reward.'

"That you may succeed is my earnest prayer," was Gandelion's answer. "Have you looked at that rare Indian maiden, Morena? I ask you solemnly if in all your wanderings north and south, you have ever seen one who is her equal in grace of person and beauty of face and mind. I am a strange fellow, perhaps, but never, in court or camp, have I seen a woman who could compare with her."

"I never saw but one, and that one might have been her sister, if one had not Indian blood in her veins," replied Gilbert.

"Who was she?" demanded the young soldier, eagerly. "I can hardly believe it, for I am proud of my little maid."

"Her name was Helen Carlyon, and her father is a major in a regiment of volunteer troops serving under Wayne."

"You said her name was; is she dead?"

"Alas, that I must say it, this very night she died, the most terrible death I ever heard or read of. Poor girl, beautiful child! I found her bones and buried them, and it was while performing the sad duty that Darromed came upon me."

Gandelion hissed an imprecation directed at the head of the offending chief through his half-closed teeth.

"Go on," he said; "tell me how she died."

And, marching over the log road in the marsh beside the Miami, Helen's lover told the story of her fearful fate at the same hour, almost the same moment, that Gilbert, the Guide, seated upon a stone beside the river, told the same sad tale to Gandelion, listening with dilated eyes.

"And you do not know in what manner the tree was fired?"

"No. We heard the report of weapons in the direction of the giant sycamore, and when we looked again the flames were pouring out at the opening between the branches and running up to the top. It was a ghastly sight to us, but if we felt it keenly, imagine the agony of that gallant young man, her lover. At first he was unjust, and he blamed us, as if we would have put her where she would be in danger if we had dreamed of such an event! But, when he came to his senses, he begged pardon of Owasco and me for wronging us even in thought. Poor lad, they were to have been married soon."

"Ah, what a horrible story!" exclaimed Gandelion, brushing his hand in a suspicious manner before his eyes. "And you say that this poor girl bore a marvelous likeness to our Queen of the Lake, Morena?"

"Wonderful; I never saw two people of a different race who bore any such resemblance, and perhaps you may say that for that reason the likeness might be slight. But, I assure you, upon my honor, that it was no fancied similarity, for the contour of the face and figure was the same. Darken the face and hands of Helen with a little tinge of brown, and place the two side by side, and you could not tell the difference. Who is this wonderful girl, Morena, and why does she wander at will through the forest?"

"I might ask you the same question with as good a prospect of a correct answer," answered Gandelion. "I only know that she is well and favorably known at Detroit and York, where she is a favorite with some of the best people. Indeed, her education is the result of her connection with an excellent lady there, who has taught her to read and write and speak with fluency and ease, both the French and English languages."

"So I understood her to say. Do you know this lady who has been so kind to this beautiful child?"

"I have the honor to be her cousin. She is called by the name of Lagrange, and she refuses to go into company, or to receive calls. When she goes out, she always wears a thick vail, and few except myself have ever seen her face. She is the Lady Bountiful of that portion of York north of the cathedral, and gives alms to all who ask. Upon the rolls of the city her name is put down as Madame Lucille Lagrange. Beyond that I can tell you nothing of her, for I am sworn to secrecy."

"And she was kind to Morena? I wonder if the child ever saw her face?"

"Let us ask her. Morena!"

The young girl was leaning gracefully against a rock, looking across the dark stream. Hearing her name called, she came slowly toward them, and stood with downcast eyes, a sad look upon her face.

"What is the matter, Morena?" kindly inquired Gandelion, as he saw the traces of tears upon her cheeks. "Why do you weep?"

"I have heard—I could not help it—the story which Gilbert told you. It is very sad, for I would have loved that sweet young lady, because all spoke so tenderly of her. But now—it is too horrible to think of."

"Do you know anything of it?"

"No. I meant to go to her and give her aid,

but I had no time, and Darromed watched me so closely. If I had gone away, he would have sent spies upon the track, and she would have been taken. I saw the burning of the tree, but hoped she had escaped until Gilbert said that he had buried her remains. Can you blame me if I weep?"

"No, Morena," said the Guide. "Weep, as one sister may weep for another. You can do another thing, which I, as a sinful man, have not the power to do: you can pray for that poor child, that God will pardon her if she ever sinned, though I cannot think she did, and take her to His rest."

"Morena will pray for the repose of her soul!" was the Indian girl's reply. "The priests have taught even a poor child like me the better way, and I have tried to do good among the Wyandots."

"We wanted to ask you if you have ever seen the face of the lady who taught you to read and write—Madame Lagrange?"

"Seen it? Yes. And it is the face of an angel. Do not ask me about it, for she trusted me when she would trust no other, and I cannot break my word, even to you."

"Nor will I ask you," said Gandelion. "Monsieur Gilbert, I release you from your parole, and if, during the night, you can study out any way of escape, without incurring the danger of a shot from the guards, I shall be glad of it, although I would be pleased to take you with me as a comrade and friend."

"Will you tie me?"

"No; I am not in the mood. There is a blanket which is at your service."

The Guide took it, chose a place close to the perpendicular wall which lined the circle, wrapped the blanket about him and lay down to rest. When morning dawned, they looked for him, but he had escaped, though how it was done they could not tell.

CHAPTER X.

A PERPENDICULAR PATH.

How was it done?

Gilbert, the Guide, slept or seemed to sleep until nearly four o'clock in the morning, at the time when the senses of sleepers usually are most fully wrapped in unconsciousness. Then he stirred a little and finally rolled over on one side, so as to face the camp. The fires had gone down and the men were lying about in various positions, all indicating complete oblivion to all outside things. Though seeming to be asleep, had any of the drowsy guards taken the trouble to watch closely, they would have seen a pair of bright eyes steadfastly regarding them. At length he rose to a sitting posture with his back against the wall, still keeping his eyes fixed upon the two men leaning upon their rifles at the mouth of the pass which led into the camp, who were looking the other way and conversing in low tones, speculating upon the probability of any attack upon their position, and almost wishing there might be to rouse their more fortunate comrades from their sleepy trance to the dangers of a soldier's life. Gilbert saw that they were paying no attention to him, and, as the leader had not apprised them of the fact that he had withdrawn the parole, they did not think it necessary to watch the prisoner.

As he sat there, in a listening attitude, there came upon the still air of the morning a cry from one of those strange, amphibious birds, the loon, ringing out with startling distinctness. It came twice, then a pause, and the hoot of the horned owl followed.

"Ha!" thought the Guide. "Are you there, my trusty friend? I thought I heard your signal, once before."

Close to the side of the rocky wall grew a tall pine, so close indeed that there were places where its body nearly touched the wall. Gilbert rose carefully, and disappeared behind the tree, placing it between himself and the guards. Then he began to climb with one knee pressed against the tree and the other against the rocky wall, clinging by every protuberance, and taking advantage of every crevice in which he could set his foot, rising slowly and carefully toward the summit of the cliff. He kept on in this way until his hand touched the lower branches of the tree, when he drew himself carefully up and sat upon the branch, looking down upon the sleeping camp. The guards had not stirred, but still stood side by side looking down the pass.

He now began to climb slowly toward the top, while, as he proceeded, the little pine bent and swayed from the weight of his body, and rested against the face of the cliff. He had still some ten feet to go, and five feet more was all he dared trust the light tree-top, which already began to show signs of weakness, and a breaking branch might betray him. He went up to this limit and stopped, looking at the verge of the cliff just beyond his reach with a longing eye.

The rock was limestone, and not a place within his reach upon which a man dare trust his foot. A bird could scarcely have clung with safety to that wall, and he began to fear that all his labor must go for nothing, as he had no desire for a sheer fall of one hundred and sev-

enty feet to the hard rock below, when he heard the loon call again, this time from the rock above him. Dare he give the answer now?

He determined to risk it, and the hoot of the owl, delivered with extraordinary accuracy, answered the call from above, and a moment after a head appeared at the edge of the cliff, upon which he could see the feathers which proclaimed the chief. His quick eye caught sight of the dark figure clinging to the tree-top, and he understood his friend's predicament.

"Wait!" he whispered.

The head disappeared, and the Guide remained quietly in the tree-top for some moments, eagerly waiting for his friend. He did not come, but something which looked like a rope dropped over the cliff and struck against him. He grasped it in both hands and released his hold upon the tree, going up the rope, hand over hand. Where had the chief obtained such a thing in that wild region? Easily enough, for the rope was made from the bark of the slippery elm tree, which he had torn off and twisted quickly into the required shape, making a strong cord which the weight of no man could break. This he had thrown over the precipice after tying the end to a stout shrub which grew upon the brow of the cliff. When the Guide came within reach, a strong hand was laid upon the shoulder of his hunting-shirt, and he was dragged over the verge, and lay panting on the sod, free.

"Good!" said Owasco, chuckling. "White man take you away from Wyandot; Owasco take you away from white man; all good."

"Thank you!" said the Guide, in a low tone. "You did that well. I never could have got up the cliff if you had not come."

"Owasco was on the watch," said the brave Onondaga. "He was ready when the Wyandots tied you to the stake, and if the young white man and Morena had not come, the blood of an Onondaga would have been shed for his white friend. But the Great Spirit heard the cry of his child and sent the young white brave to help you, better than a poor Indian could have done."

The Guide rose and the two began to cross the rocky platform silently, realizing that it was not safe to converse so close to the camp of Gandelion, for Gilbert knew that young man well enough to understand that while he would not be very much grieved at his escape, he would take every means to recapture him, if he was forced to do it, sooner than have his men think he had connived at the escape. After going half a mile over a difficult and dangerous way, they sat down to rest.

"All safe here," said Owasco. "Let us talk, for the heart of Owasco is glad to see the face of his friend again. Many a time have we gone out to the battle together; many a time have we come back to the Onondaga lodges, bringing trophies to hang upon the pole, that the hearts of the old men and women might sing for joy. Owasco feared that Gilbert would walk the woods with him no more, and now we are together again, and all is well."

"Man cannot die until his work is done, my brave Owasco," replied Gilbert. "When the Master of Life calls me, I must go, and so must you; but the time is not yet."

"Let us away to the army and see if the young war-chief has come in, and make his heart glad, for he weeps for the pale-face girl who died in the burning tree."

"That is the best plan, Owasco. But do you know that at times a feeling comes over me, and I feel that the tears we have shed for her have been all in vain, and that we shall see her yet? I had a strange dream to-night, and thought I heard her call for help."

"Wagh!"

"She came to me in my dreams and cried: 'Help me; I am in danger.' Then I looked and thought I saw the chief Darromed bearing her across the river in his arms, while I stood upon the shore, and could give her no help."

"Listen to the spirit of dreams!" cried the chief, "for the spirit speaks true. I, too, had a dream while I waited for you to-night, and I saw her, just as she was when I left her in the tree. Let us go there, then, and prove for ourselves whether it was her bones we buried, or those of another."

"That is the best way," answered the Guide, quickly. "I am not a general believer in dreams, but this was so vivid that I cannot help thinking it is real. Come."

They sprung up together and held their course as the bird flies across the country toward the place where they had buried the bones they supposed to be those of the promised bride of Clinton Waterman. These experienced woodmen knew all the trails and foot-paths, and an hour's rapid walking brought them near the spot. Desolation reigned around, for the fire had crossed the little glade, sweeping away everything before it in its onward course, leaving only blackened ashes. Not a blade of grass or leaf was to be seen, and it was only by the mark they had put upon the tree that they were able to discover it.

While the Indian listened for the sound of coming feet, that they might not again be surprised by the savages, the Guide removed the grave he had made near the head, so that the skull was exposed. A single glance was sufficient to satisfy him that the hasty opinion they had formed the night before was erroneous, and this skeleton, so far from being that of Helen, was that of an Indian. He hastily covered the skull and whispered to the savage to come away. The expression of delight upon his face convinced Owasco that they were not wrong in their surmise, but that Helen had escaped from the tree. The question was, where had she gone?

"We must find her," said the Guide, "if she is yet above the earth. I do not believe the Wyandots have seen her since yesterday afternoon."

"No, for Darromed was angry because she had escaped and did not know where to look for her. Come, we must find the trail, and who can do that better than you and I?"

They separated and made the circuit of the glade just outside the burned line, carefully inspecting every inch of ground passed over. The first time they found no trace and passed each other without a word, widening the circle by a few feet. Twice they passed about the circle without results, but half-way round the third time, just behind the blackened stump of the burned sycamore, the Guide paused and looked intently at the earth. Here was some sort of a track certainly, but filled by light white ashes. The Guide kneeled beside it and blew the ashes out of the track, and revealed the mark of a delicate shoe, such as only a woman or child could have worn. It was not an Indian woman, for she would have worn moccasins; not a white woman of low station, for she would not have been the possessor of a shoe of that make. The low ejaculation on the part of the Guide brought the Indian to his side, and they looked at the track together, and satisfied themselves that it could only have been made by the foot of Helen Carlyon.

"So far, good!" said the Guide. "She escaped, but where did she go? We have this trail to guide us, and let us see where it will lead us."

They began to follow it with bent heads, carefully watching every trace left behind by the flying girl, and saw that she had not thought of anything but escaping as quickly as she could, and that, bewildered by pain and fear, she had not given a thought to the direction she took. Doubtless she was wandering through the pathless woods, and having lost her guide, the river, knew not which way to turn or what to do.

"Poor child!" murmured the Guide. "I pray God she may not have fallen in with a bear or a panther in her desperate flight. There are the tracks again, Owasco, plainer than ever. It needs no scout to follow the trail she leaves in her terror."

Still stooping, still inspecting the earth, they followed the trail away from the river. Now and then they would come to a place where she had stopped, undecided as to what course to take, and turned off in a new direction. Everything in the trail told that she was utterly at fault and had merely stumbled blindly on in the darkness, seeking only to get out of reach of the Indians. At last they came to a place where a pile of leaves had been scraped together, and here she had evidently slept, after fruitless endeavors to find something to guide her. Gilbert pictured in his mind this innocent girl sleeping in the deep forest, in danger from bear, wolf or panther, but wearied out and unable to fly further. "Poor darling," he thought. "How she has suffered this terrible night! But we shall soon find her and take her safe to the army, and to her lover, who is doubtless grieving for her now, and swearing vengeance on her murderers."

The trail freshened fast after they left the place where she had passed the night, and they knew that she could not be far away. They hurried on in eager haste, close together, intent upon the trail. It ended suddenly and abruptly upon the brink of a deep chasm which nature had reft in the limestone, which was so deep that the bottom seemed shrouded in darkness. With a low cry of grief, Gilbert flung himself down at the edge and looked into the chasm, where he could distinctly make out the flutter of cloth. Without giving himself time for thought, he began the descent, clinging to bush and rock upon the almost perpendicular face of the cliff, and keeping hand and eye ready to assist him. The chief remained upon the top. He saw the Guide reach the bottom and dart under the projecting rock. The next moment he sprung out again, wildly excited.

"Find an elm and make a rope about twenty feet long, Owasco; be spry!"

Owasco hurried away and found an elm from which he quickly stripped bark enough for his rope and twisted it into shape, and was back again directly, and threw the end down to his companion.

Gilbert busied himself for a moment below, and then swung his weight upon the rope above to test it, and found that it stood the strain. "Haul away!" he cried, "but be very careful; you've got a precious burden."

Owasco tugged away at the weighted rope, but it was nothing to his strong and trained muscles. He could feel that Gilbert was following the burden up the face of the cliff, for at times he lifted it so that there was comparatively little strain upon the bark rope. A moment of breathless suspense, and then Gilbert called out to him to make the rope fast. First the head of the Guide appeared, and then he stood upright, bearing upon his brawny arm the senseless body of Helen Carlyon, white and still, with a little rill of blood trickling down her face from a cut in her temple. Owasco darted forward and took her out of his arms, and the Guide clambered over the face of the cliff, where he sat down pale and weak, weeping like a child.

"There she is, the sweetest, the prettiest, the best girl in the territory, and now look at her. She's dead. Look at her poor white face, and then tell me that she lives, if you dare!"

"Bring water," said Owasco, quickly, bending his ear close to the lips of the senseless girl. "Water, water!"

Gilbert sprung up and ran down the slope to a little stream which flowed below, and brought back a canteen of water, with which they bathed the pale face. The color came slowly back, her breath fluttered and grew strong, and the beautiful eyes slowly opened. Gilbert uttered a cry of joy.

"She lives; Father in Heaven, I thank Thee for it! My poor little pale flower, don't try to speak or move, for you have not the strength."

Helen looked at them, recognized the two faces bending over her, and again fainted. Owasco said not a word, but his face beamed with unutterable joy, as he washed away the blood-stains from her forehead and looked for the wound, and satisfied himself that it was but a slight one. Gilbert, unmanned by the sudden discovery he had made, was able to do little, but kneeled beside her, watching with frantic anxiety the efforts of Owasco to resuscitate her, which were at length successful, for with a gasping sigh, she suddenly opened her eyes again and looked from face to face in a wandering, unconscious way.

"Where am I? what is this?"

"Safe, sweet girl; you are with friends, who will keep you safe, so do not suffer yourself to be uneasy, for you are hurt."

"Oh, the burning tree, the horrible beast, and the ghastly sight I saw! Save me, oh, save me!"

"You are in no danger," repeated the Guide. "Believe me that I would die to aid you, and that if any one does you an injury, it must be when this hand is cold and Owasco is gone."

"I will prove it," replied Owasco, quietly. "You shall see when the time comes which of us two will do the most to serve you."

They raised her and carried her down to the brink of the stream, and forming a shelter of branches, waited for her to recover strength.

CHAPTER XI.

THE GLADIATOR'S PRIZE.

THEN she told them the story of that fearful night, the struggle with the bear, the coming of the savages, down to that dreadful moment when the fight with the fire commenced, a more disheartening battle than the last. In the midst of that blinding cloud she was dimly conscious that a rifle cracked outside, and then she heard the rush of hurrying feet. Still she hacked and hewed with the little ax, striving to cut away the hanging bark and trample out the sparks under her feet. But in spite of her almost superhuman efforts, the fire gained way, and she felt that she could not much longer endure it. She was in an oven, the smoke thickening each moment, the heat becoming more and more intense, and the crack and roar of that devouring element sounding in her ears.

To die by fire!

She had heard of such deaths amid the jeering of savages and the demon dance of death, but this death alone, in the horrible tomb, overcame her resolution to meet it rather than face the savages, and, throwing aside the ax, she stooped low and darted through the flaming portal. Her garments were in flames, but she extinguished them quickly and looked about her, expecting every moment to be seized upon by the Indians, but to her utter surprise she found herself alone. No, not quite alone, for there, upon the green grass of the little glade, lay the body of an Indian, shot through the heart. This man had in some way aroused the ire of the chief and had met his death by the rifle, and it was his bones over which those unavailing tears had been shed.

She did not pause to decide what course to take, but fled away into the darkness, only seeking to get as far as possible from the Wyandots. With torn and bleeding feet, with flesh smarting from burns received in the tree, she staggered on for hours in the trackless wild, eagerly longing to find water to cool her parched tongue. She would have made for the river, but feared that the savages would take her prisoner. Torn by briars, bruised by stones and knots, weary and almost wishing for death, she was gladdened at last by coming to the edge of a swale, full of brackish water, which she drank

as eagerly as if it were nectar, and bathed her scorched and blistered hands in it, until the pain was somewhat allayed. Then she scraped together a pile of leaves and lay down to rest, and slept for hours, unconscious, and indeed caring little for her danger from savages or beasts.

It was not quite light when she awoke and went on her way aimlessly, knowing nothing of her position, for she was lost—lost in the great forest. This child of tender nurture, to whom her father had been so kind that he "would not permit the winds of summer to visit her too roughly," with burned hands and bleeding feet, wandering alone and unaided in that vast solitude! The rabbit peeped out at her from his cover as she passed; the partridge ran clucking away; the nimble squirrel leaped to the top of a lofty tree and chattered down at her, while a great owl, with staring eyes and broad face, looked down at her from a branch which stretched across her way.

She sat down to rest and think of her position. The forest was so thick about her that, although she knew it must be nearly sunrise, she could not see the sun to make it her guide. She rose again and wandered on, longing for food, and thinking what her fate might be, if she died in that solitude. Perhaps some hunter, or an Indian warrior, traversing the region, would find her bones, where she must lay her down to die, and wonder to what manner of person they belonged.

A low scratching sound above her caused her to raise her head, and, glancing quickly upward, she saw something which seemed to curdle the very blood in her veins. A great tree stretched a strong limb outward, and lying prone upon this limb, with gleaming eyes and waving tail, she saw that terror of the American forest, the panther. Not one of the dwarfed and stunted specimens we sometimes see in our menageries, but a powerful brute, well worthy to be ranked with his Asiatic sister, the tiger of Bengal. The long, lithe, hairy body lay motionless upon the limb, the only parts which moved being his tail, which was waving gently to and fro, and his eyes, which seemed to change from green to yellow, and then to burning red. Helen forgot in a moment, in her present danger, that she was hungry, wounded, and weary, as her fascinated eyes lingered upon the changing orbs of the panther, who from time to time set his claws into the bark of the tree, causing the grating sound which had first drawn her attention.

"Would he spring at her?"

She found herself repeating this question over and over again, and in utter despair she thought of the remaining pistol which Waterman had given her. Hidden in her robe, it had luckily escaped the fire, and she drew it out and looked at the priming, giving it a little pat as she did so, as Waterman had taught her to do, in order to prime it.

As she did that, the panther gave a low snarl and half arose upon the bough, and sighting him hastily, she fired. There was a wild scream, and the huge body of the panther struck her, and she was conscious of a terrible fall, a shock, and then remembered little more—until she saw the kind faces of Owasco and the Guide bending over her.

She had been standing, unconscious of the fact, very near the brink of the chasm into which the Guide had descended to find her, and when the panther leaped, they fell into the chasm together, and the huge beast first. He fell across a huge stone, and his neck was broken, and upon this great cushion Helen struck, receiving but slight injury, although she fainted. When she came to her senses, she lay across the body of the panther with her head bleeding from a cut she had received. Then she lost consciousness again, and when she woke the scout had dragged her out of the deep pit, and she was among friends.

The two men listened to her story with ill-concealed grief at the sad time the poor girl had passed, and interrupted her from time to time by exclamations of wonder or commiseration.

"A terrible night and day you have passed, my poor child," said the Guide, "and now I doubt whether you are strong enough to bear a journey to the army. It is more than ten miles, if you could go the way we must, but the river is best, if we only dared try it."

"No," said Owasco. "The Pale Flower must go with us, but we cannot go by the river. Darromed is there with his men and he longs for our blood in revenge for what we have done."

At this moment a plumed head was lifted for a moment from the bushes and peered out at them, and then it was lost to sight as the owner lay flat upon the earth, watching them eagerly. Luckily they spoke in English and he could understand little except by their gestures.

"How can she go, Owasco?" said the Guide, reprovingly. "You know as well as I do that the poor child's feet are torn and bleeding, and that she cannot walk ten miles through the forest."

"No," said Owasco. "Can't walk, but look; got strong arms, you got strong arms; carry her."

"That's something like it," rejoined Gilbert,

beginning to smile. "I thought you'd get to the right idea after awhile, Owasco. We can make a litter and carry her, and so we will. But can't you think of a better plan than that?"

"No."

"Then I can," said Gilbert. "What do you say to the cave at the bend, which only you and I know? We might take her there and leave her, and then put for the army and bring up enough force after her to scare all the Wyandots out of the country."

"Good!" said Owasco. "Gilbert is very wise, and we will do that."

Suddenly he ceased talking and his eyes began to blaze. These two men had tramped the woods so long together that they knew by a motion of the finger when danger was near, and, unperceived, the chief had given his companion a sign. It meant, "Look out; somebody watching." Owasco kept up an idle and desultory chatter, all the time keeping his eye upon the bush and getting nearer to it, when his body suddenly rose into the air and lighted upon the back of the crouching savage, who was no other than Darromed, who had been trailing his game. He uttered a yell of surprise and bounded to his feet, shaking off the grasp of his assailant and snatching knife and hatchet from its sheath. The Onondaga was similarly armed, for in the last few hours of desperate marching and fighting he had lost his rifle. The two glowered at each other with savage eyes, the muscles on their strong brown arms swelling as they grasped their weapons.

"Ha, dog of a Wyandot!" screamed Owasco, shaking his keen hatchet in the air. "At last we meet with weapons in our hands. Dog and spy, defend your life!"

The two closed together eagerly, for Darromed was noways loth to join battle with a man of the known reputation of the Onondaga. No one, ignorant of the perfection to which such men advance their skill in the use of their favorite weapons, can imagine how desperate was the conflict. The knife was a shield as well as a weapon of offense, and blow after blow was turned harmlessly aside on either side. With stroke and thrust, hand to hand and foot to foot, they struggled for the mastery. Darromed had received a flesh-wound in the right hip, and the left wrist of Owasco had been slashed by the knife, yet these slight wounds only seemed to arouse their native fierceness to its utmost. Helen started up, and Gilbert looked in vain for a weapon, but all had been taken from him by Darromed when he was at the stake, and he was completely unarmed. Not that he feared to trust Owasco with the savage opponent, but he feared that the chief would escape, and he had never had so good an opportunity. Snatching up a heavy club which lay at his feet, he darted in, but an angry cry from Owasco restrained him.

"What would you have?" he cried. "I will hunt this dog to earth, and I need no help."

"But he must not escape," said the Guide, sternly. "If he does, you and I are parted from that hour, for I hold that man my enemy who comes between me and my revenge."

"He shall not escape," replied Owasco, parrying a desperate thrust upon the part of the wild savage and returning it by a blow of the hatchet which staggered the furious chief.

Then he rushed in, and the fierce battle became closer and more desperate. Inch by inch he forced the Wyandot back, contesting his ground stubbornly, and fighting off his fate with desperate strength and courage. In that trying hour the chief well maintained his hard-earned reputation as bravest of the Wyandots, in holding his own so long against his agile and iron-muscled antagonist. But he was failing fast, and his great agony at the thought was written in living lines upon his stern face.

"Yield to me, Darromed!" cried Owasco. "You have done well, but you are mine, and you know it."

"Not yet!" hissed the Wyandot.

"Then thus I win you," said the Onondaga, making a thrust with his knife at the same moment that his tomahawk alighted upon the feathered crest of the chief. He staggered and fell prone upon the earth, his weapons dropping out of his hand, while Owasco stood with his foot upon his breast, and his hand lifted in a heroic attitude.

"Ah-ha!" he cried. "Who is like Owasco in the day of his wrath, when the arrows of vengeance fly, and the hatchet is dug from the earth? He is chief of his tribe, and the sound of his tread is like the rushing of the thunder."

A strange trait in the Indian is this, that he must boast of his deeds. Owasco was as free from this weakness as any man of his race, but in an excitement like the present, he would brag like a born Yankee, and Helen, excited as she was by the combat, could not help smiling at his words.

Owasco proceeded to bind his enemy with strong buckskin bands, and soon completed his task. When done, he took up his enemy by the head and signaled the Guide to take his feet, and they went down the path beside the silent river among the huge rocks with which nature has so burdened the section about the Miami rapids. They stopped in a rocky defile, and the

Guide borrowed Helen's scarf, with which he muffled the eyes of the prisoner.

"He must not see where we are taking him," he explained.

When he was blindfolded, they took him up again, and kept on down the defile. The descent soon became precipitous, and it was with the utmost difficulty that Helen followed them. All at once the Guide turned aside, and stepping upon a high shelf of rock, dragged his prisoner after him, and then, putting aside some tangled vines, he showed a round dark opening in the rocks, just large enough for a man to enter, stooping. Into this opening they bundled the prisoner, and bidding Helen follow and keep close to them, went on down the dark long passage, seemingly into the bowels of the mountain, while Helen, trembling in every limb, more from exhaustion than from fear, followed close behind the two in the darkness, guided only by their footsteps, for she could no longer see them.

"Halt!" said the Guide, and they laid the prisoner down. Then the click of flint and steel was heard; bright sparks scintillated in the darkness, and for a moment made visible the arched walls of the subterranean palace in which they stood. Soon a light gleamed; the dry leaves had kindled, and a little flame leaped up. He heaped on small twigs and fed the fire. Then, taking some fat pine-knots from a crevice, he lighted two of them and put them up in the walls, where they threw a lurid light upon the scene. A glorious scene it was, full of wonderful beauty. Nature had worked fantastic shapes in the cold, gray stones, of columns and towers, and forms resembling statuary.

Helen held her breath in wonder as she looked about the grand old room, and saw how prolific the wonder-worker had been of his labor in this strange place. Gilbert caught the expression of pleased surprise on her face, and smiled too.

"Yes, yes, little girl; what are the puny works of man compared to these? What can man do to imitate this natural architecture—this wonderful graining—this clouded canopy above us? Nothing. When I stand in such a place as this I feel my simple faith strengthened in the wisdom of the Great Creator. You wonder that I, a rough forest-man, a killer of Indians, a hired guide and spy, should speak in these terms, but I tell you that I was not always thus. Time was when Gilbert—Ha! I had nearly forgotten myself then, and spoken a name long since under ban, though I have never disgraced it, nor ever shall."

"Can I say nothing to comfort you, sir? I feel that I am speaking to a man of many sorrows, but still it must be something to sustain you to know that through all you have never forgotten God."

"I thank Him for that. Say no more of me or my sad fate, but let me go on my way alone. I have decided to leave you here, and to go back to the fort and bring aid. I am satisfied that the force of outlying men is not so great but that fifty well-armed men can safely pass from one fort to another, and if you do not fear to stay here alone—"

"I have faced greater dangers than that," replied the girl. "You may trust me."

"There is plenty of jerked venison in that recess, and when you need drink you will find a cool spring at the south end of the cave. Do not go far out of this room, for there are many pits yonder to which that into which you fell this morning would be but a plaything. Here you must stay and guard the prisoner, knowing that nothing can harm you. Good-by. Owasco, come."

CHAPTER XII.

THE RELIEF GUARD.

Two days after they left Helen in the cave at the side of the stream, there marched out of the camp of Wayne fifty brave foresters with Clinton Waterman and John Mack at their head, and Owasco and Gilbert scouting in front. A strong-limbed, hardy, danger-daring race, such as had sprung up in the new world—men who loved to march and toil, who took it as their birthright, and did gallant deeds for glory's sake. Few of their names live except in old songs, and the almost forgotten legends of their day. Yet, that these men lived and toiled, endured privation and faced danger with unswerving zeal, the great States they built up remain to prove.

They marched on foot, for if they had taken to the river they must have had a hard and difficult pull up the rapids, and it was thought better to march by land. They left the river on their left and turned their faces to the northwest, to cross the stretch of country contained in the bend of the river.

The countenance of Clinton shone with enthusiasm, and a high and holy purpose. Since the day when Gilbert and Owasco had come into the fort, bringing the news that Helen was safe, he had been a new man, and had given Wayne no peace until they were on the march. Gilbert saw the exaltation upon that young face, and smiled as he went on over the tangled path. He had done some good then. If his own fate must be a hard one; if he must go on, hope-

less and alone, without a glimmer in his sky to betray the coming of a brighter morning, at least he could hope to see others blessed, and he vowed in his heart to do all he could to bring these two together, who had suffered so much for each other in these terrible days.

There had been no sign of the enemy since the coming of Clinton. Gilbert had an idea that Gandelion might have had something to do with the withdrawal of the Indians, who had been threatening the post for some time before.

"Gilbert, dear," whispered Pat O'Driscoll, who had smuggled himself into the command in a way only known to himself. "D'y'e think the rid divils w'u'd be pitchin' intil us soon?"

"Keep your tongue between your teeth, Handy Pat," said Gilbert. "I'd like to know how you got here, anyhow?"

"D'y'e see that?" roared Pat, thrusting out a ponderous brogan. "D'y'e mind that bit av a fut? I've got the mate til that, and a fine pair they'd be til walk an the wather. Who! Whillaloo! Murther! I'd like to see the man, big or little, great or small, that w'u'd take it an himself to dhrive me back!"

"Oh, I suppose you must go, but if you have any regard for your scalp and would like to keep it on your head, give your tongue a holiday and don't exercise your brogue too much. That's all I've got to say."

"Maybe it's fightin' wid me ye w'u'd be afther?" said Pat. "Och, thin, but it's meself is always agraable to that same. So pick out a bit av a kippin' off the road, and come at me wunst."

"What's a kippin'?" demanded Clinton, with a light laugh.

"A kippin'? Sure an' that's a bit av a stick, like this now, phat ye see in me hand. Glory till the man that tached an Irishman how to handle a shillalah, for it's his natheral weapon. I'm going to bate the he'd av the man wid the big mouth, who calls himself Gilbert the Guide."

"Nonsense," said Gilbert. "I don't mean to quarrel with you, for I rather like you. But, you must keep more quiet. Put down that stick, my lad; I warn you."

Pat was advancing upon Gilbert with this shillalah in his hand, and a grin ominous of mischief upon his face. Gilbert wheeled suddenly, and as the Irishman made a leap at him, he shot out his long arm with lightning-like swiftness and caught him by the throat and wrist, wrenched the stick from his grasp, then shook him as a terrier shakes a rat. So suddenly was it done that Pat had no time to think before he found himself powerless in the iron grasp of the Guide.

"Let up," said Pat; "I'm bate."

"Do you promise to behave yourself?"

"Yis; to you!"

"All right; having learned this lesson, I will make a scout of you yet. You will load your rifle and stay by Owasco and myself, for I know you do not fear danger."

"The devil a bit!" said Pat.

From this hour, during their many dangers, these two men were constant friends. The respect which the Guide had impressed the Irishman with by his wonderful strength and agility, never left him through life, and Pat had no desire to feel himself in that iron gripe again.

At night they camped in the deep woods beside a spring which bubbled up among the leaves. One of the men, in a jocose spirit, led the Irishman to take a drink, and he complied, but he instantly leaped to his feet, with a horrified expression on his face, holding his tongue in his hand and glaring at the man who had led him to drink, in an angry way. Then he began to spit like one troubled with a phlegm in his throat, and to look about for a stick.

"Now thin, mister, I'm thinkin' ye w'u'd call that a nice thrick. Look ye; ye'll be after puttin' some comether on the wather. Phat did ye put intil it?"

"Not a thing," said the man.

"Don't thy to pull wool over the eyes of Handy Pat O'Driscoll!" roared the Irishman, in great ire. "It's a pole-cat ye put intil it, I does be thinkin'. Now I kin bate the hid av any man that done that dirty thrick."

"Let him alone, Pat," said Gilbert, who was laughing heartily. "The man didn't touch the water at all. It's only a 'medicine spring.'"

"A phat?"

"A medicine spring; at least that is what the Indians call it."

"Sure then it's poisoned! Ochone, ochone! Here am I, Handy Pat O'Driscoll, cut off in the flower av me youth by a dirty trick, poisoned, begorra, by a rid-bla'g'ard av an Injin. Aroo! Oh, and was it for this me mither said til me, 'Pat, acushla, mavourneen delish, go til the devil,' an' so I wint. Give me something to aise the pain, for I'm stone-dead and kilt entirely wid it."

"Pshaw; there is nothing the matter with the water," said Gilbert. "We all drink it, and find it excellent for the health. I take it that there is a good deal of sulphur in its composition."

"Say that ag'in!" cried Pat. "Och, the howly saints be good to us, but did ye ever hear

such jaw-breaking wurruds as thim? D'y'e mane that I must die in about tin minnits?"

There was a gourd lying by the spring, and Gilbert took it up and filled it with the bright water, and drank it off with apparent relish, and then gave the gourd to Clinton.

"Drink without fear," he said. "If a man never takes nothing into his mouth which is any worse than that, then I say he will live long."

"Why do we halt?" said the young man, eagerly. "I am on thorns every moment we remain here."

"The men need go no further. After we get a bit to eat, you and I, with Owasco and Handy Pat, will go to the cave and find the little girl, and bring her here. I don't like going there with too much of a crowd, for Gandelion may be around, and he'd like a shy at John Mack; they've met before."

"Then you know Gandelion?"

"Why not? Few men in the Indian country can claim to be unknown to me. Our people are not so widely spread that men of note like the one calling himself Gandelion can be strangers to a man in my profession. I know him well, and although he is an enemy, I esteem him highly. Brave even to desperation, generous to a fault, he can be a subtle and vigilant enemy or a keen friend. I saw him, at Harman's defeat, shoot with his own hand an Indian who was murdering a wounded man of Purdy's regiment, although a score of savages stood near and he was almost alone. You can trust Gandelion in an emergency."

"You speak highly of him."

"And he deserves it at my hands. Now go and get something to eat, and be ready to march in half an hour. Owasco is already prepared, and I will speak to the Irishman myself."

"Why do you take Pat?"

"Because I see in him the making of a capital scout, if rightly used. He is sharp-eyed, light-footed and brave as a lion, and with my training, he will be second to none in the particular line for which I design him."

They separated, and Clinton Waterman prepared a simple meal and sat down to eat, while the Guide walked over to the fire where Pat was sitting, devouring venison as if his life depended upon the amount consumed within a stated time. He grinned widely as Gilbert came up and deposited another piece of venison on the glowing coals.

"I intend to make you an offer," the Guide said, "and it remains with you to accept it or not, as you choose. Owasco and I have been talking, and we have decided upon taking you as a companion and teaching you the duties of a scout and guide, if you on your part will promise to obey us implicitly for a year, when danger threatens."

"Deed an' I'd be willing to obey the likes av you, Gilbert," said Pat, plaintively. "But the red naygur; I'm afeard it w'u'd go ag'inst me conscience to obey him. Not but that he's a daecent lad, and I like him mighty well, but w'u'd I like to be under him, I dunno."

"You must decide for yourself. One of the great requisites of a scout is implicit obedience to his superiors, and unless you can agree to this, the sooner we part the better. At the same time the advice of Owasco will always come through me, so that in reality you have only me to obey."

Pat bit another mouthful out of the venison in a reflective way, looking keenly at his white friend.

"I'll do it, thin; ye may count upon Pat O'Driscoll, and whin you say come, I'll come; and whin ye say go, I'll go. It's a barg'in."

"Very good. You will go out with us tonight to the cave in which we left Helen Carlyon and bring her into camp, and as this will be your trial trip, you must be upon your good behavior."

Just at dusk the four left the camp, threading in single file the recesses of the forest, the Indian leading, Pat second, Waterman in the center, while the Guide brought up the rear. They were heavily armed, for there could be no way of telling what might happen, in a country infested as this was with hostile savages, who might be lurking in every covert. The path they followed was rough and stony, and brought them, after a toilsome march, to the gate of the cavern, where the Guide halted, and signaled to his companions to do the same.

"Don't let us scare the little girl by coming upon her too sudden," said he. "I'll go in first, and prepare her for your visit."

He crawled into the opening and was lost to view, going down into the bowels of the earth. They waited in breathless expectation, in solemn silence, for his signal to come on, the Indian leaning against a rock like a statue carved in bronze, while the Irishman sat down on a stone. Then they heard his signal, muffled strangely, coming up out of the dim depths. Owasco rose and led the way into the dark and solemn place, followed by his eager companions. They would have rushed on, heedless of danger, but his voice restrained them, until they saw far away the glimmer of a distant light.

"There he is!" cried Waterman, eagerly. "Hurry on, chief; have you no regard for my impatience?"

They quickened their steps, and found the Guide standing in a dejected attitude beside a smoldering fire, but Helen, the object of their coming, was gone.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE CAVE TRAIL.

A FIERCE light gleamed in the eyes of the lover, and in his fury he caught Gilbert by the arm. "Where is she?" cried the young man. "Have you led me here only to find that she is lost again, perhaps beyond all hope?"

"Young man," said Gilbert, "have a little confidence in me, and do me the justice to say that I could no more dream that the man I left so securely could escape, than that Helen would be in such terrible danger in the sycamore. It is enough that she is gone, and that Darromed is gone, but where they are I cannot even dream. We shall find them if they are above ground, and we will search for them far down in the bowels of the earth."

"Is there more than one way of escape from this cave?" said Waterman, humbled by the manner of the Guide.

"Yes, there are three, and we must first find out whether they went out the same way they came in. That shall be your duty, Owasco, and find out as quickly as you can. They have not been gone long, at any rate."

Owasco lighted a torch at the embers of the dying fire, and went silently back on the way by which he had entered, while the Guide lighted another torch and went to the place where he had left the chief bound. The thongs lay upon the hard floor, and had evidently been untied. There were marks of a scuffle, and several little articles which Helen had worn were scattered about the room.

"That's it, then," said the Guide. "The sly rascal slipped his hand loose somehow, and then untied himself. Ha, what's this? Blood, as I live, and from a rather bad wound, too."

"It is Helen's," gasped Waterman. "The double-dyed villain has killed that sweet girl."

"I don't think it," replied the Guide, shaking his head. "On the contrary, I rather think it is the blood of Darromed, and it will be a good way to track them. I left the girl a pistol, well loaded, one of those you gave her, you know, and no doubt when he got loose she fired at him and hit him too. But she did not aim true enough; you can always tell when a weak finger pulls the trigger."

"Here's the Injin," cried Pat.

"What news?" said the Guide, shortly.

"Darromed did not go out there," replied the chief. "Let us search for him, and when we find him, we will take his scalp."

Gilbert now took the lead, a pistol in one hand, a torch in the other, following the bloody trail which Darromed had left behind him upon the white limestone floor. If the young captain had not been in such agony concerning Helen, he would have been delighted with the wonder-world through which they were passing. Lofty passages, with vaulted roofs, hung with a starry-decked canopy; great rooms, frescoed by the hand of nature, and all the wonderful forms into which limestone shapes itself. And over those white floors the four men pressed on, while the wondering eyes of Handy Pat dwelt with new delight upon each addition to the grand beauties through which he passed. But Gilbert, never taking his eyes from those bloody footprints, trod on steadily and swiftly, pausing now and then to mark the spot when the tracks were faint. Suddenly he paused upon the brink of a deep pit, reaching far down into the bowels of the earth. A deep, dark, noisome place, from which a reeking damp mist rose, and spread about the cave, from side to side. Stooping on the brink, the Guide listened, and every man held his breath, and they heard a low, murmuring sound, as of rushing water, far below.

"I don't know what to make of this place," said the Guide. "I've tried to study it out again and again, and have never succeeded. Whether it is a subterranean stream, or a waterfall, I can't say, but it is water, and it's hot, or else where does this hot steam come from?"

"Don't stop to speculate on that, my dear Gilbert, but go on in the search. While we linger here, Darromed is bearing Helen further and further away from us. I beg you, if you have any regard for me, to push on at once, and help me to aid my darling," said Waterman.

"Impatient, like all boys," muttered the Guide. "I might have known it would be hard to check him, once he gets his head set on an object. Now, listen to me, Clinton Waterman; am I to lead in this affair, or are you?"

"Of course I must leave it to you, helpless as I am in regard to this place," replied the young man, earnestly. "You should make some allowance for my feelings."

"As if I didn't do that," murmured the Guide. "As if I could shut my heart to the cry of sorrow from a human breast. The boy don't know me, or he wouldn't say that to me. He don't know that my hopes, lying stranded

and withered on a desolate shore, show themselves to my heart like the bare ribs of shipping, wrecked in the long ago. There; don't think me hard on you, lad, for I don't mean to be. I know how hard it is to lose loved ones; I've lost them myself, and that makes me feel the more for you, my poor boy. I'll find your Helen, if she lives, and if she dies, I will so avenge her that the Wyandots shall tremble when the name of Gilbert, the Guide, is spoken of in their lodges. Come around me, you three, and swear by all we hold holy and dear, by our hopes of heaven, and a land of peace where the 'wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest,' that you will never turn back from the duty of seeking this lost child, or avenging her if slain, unless incapacitated by wounds."

"I swear," said Clinton, solemnly, "and I will be true and steadfast to keep this, my vow."

"And so do I, Handy Pat O'Driscoll, county Antrim, and the devil resave me the day I turn back like a coward from danger."

"I cannot swear," said Owasco, proudly; "but I give you the word of a man who never lied that I will not turn back, until the white maiden is free or avenged, or another Onondaga scalp hangs on the war-pole of a Wyandot lodge."

They joined hands, these four strong men, and an electric shock seemed to pass from arm to arm. Henceforth they were bound in a new tie, by their solemn vow. Danger lay before their path in the coming days, but they did not fear it; privations were their lot, and they shared them boldly; torture and great sorrow came upon them, but never despair; but they were faithful and true to each other in the days before them.

"Now for work!" said the Guide. "Our path is cut out for us and we must tread it unshrinkingly, even to the end of our weary road. Some of us may grow weary, and lie down to rest forever from the cares of the world, but the rest must keep on unshrinkingly, if our course takes us into the very heart of the Wyandot villages. Give me the torch, Owasco, for I must study the course of the chief from this point."

He took the torch and looked for the bloody marks. They were faint now, as if the wound had nearly ceased to bleed, and upon a rock near by they found some pieces of stained calico rags and buckskin, which had evidently been used to stanch the wound.

"See this," said the Guide. "It says to me more plainly than words could that here the Indian put Helen down and bound up his wound. I should say that it was in the leg, and probably a flesh-wound, or he could not have gone on so long, bleeding in that way. Very likely he bound the girl while he attended to the wound."

"But how did he cross the chasm?" demanded Waterman. "I should say it is ten feet wide."

"He did not cross it at all, I think," replied Gilbert. "Remember that he was forced to carry the girl in his arms, for she is too high-spirited to go with him willingly. There must be some outlet from this point of which I know nothing, or else he tried back from this point to the opening we passed about a hundred yards above."

At this moment Owasco began to climb up to a sort of shelf which ran along the wall of the vaulted passage, about three feet from the floor. Something bright glittered in the light of the lamp, and picking it up, he passed it to his companion. Gilbert gave it silently into the hand of the young soldier, who pressed it to his lips with a joyful cry. It was a broad gold ring, with a single small diamond set into a tablet upon the top.

"That belongs to Helen," he said, quickly— "a gift which I made her in happier days, when we were betrothed. Doubtless she managed to slip it from her finger, in the absence of anything else she could lay hold of, to guide us in following her."

The Guide sprung upon the shelf by the side of Owasco, and together they ran along the wall, striking upon the rocks as they passed along to see if any were loose. At last one trembled under a heavy blow from the hand of Owasco, and seizing it in both hands, he plucked it out, and revealed an opening beyond. The two men worked hard, and soon cleared a passage through which they could make their way, but before they passed in Gilbert examined the bottom of the passage, and there, in the dust of centuries, they found the tracks of an Indian foot, pressed heavily into the debris, as if he had carried a weight.

"Didn't I tell you so?" cried the Guide. "He carried her so far, but he can't stand that long, for the girl will make a heavy load after a little while, light as she looks. Come on, you fellows."

He crawled into the low passage, closely followed by Owasco, the Irishman and Waterman. The place was very narrow, and yet the air was pure and fresh—a strange characteristic of these limestone caves. For some distance the fine debris was thick upon the stone

floor and they could follow the tracks readily, but as the passage grew wider and higher the dust disappeared, until they again stood in a lofty room, like that in which they had left Helen, containing, if possible, more beautiful specimens from the hand of that wonderful architect and artist, Nature.

But the tracks had disappeared, and they could no longer follow in the way they had done before. For some distance there was no passage, either to the right or left, but at last they came to a place where the road separated, and the object of their pursuit might have taken either course.

"Stay here until I return or call for you," commanded the Guide, dashing down the right-hand passage with a torch in his hand. "I won't be long in finding out if she went this way."

He hurried on without paying any attention to the entreaties of Pat that he might go, and was absent some ten minutes, when he returned, saying that the passage had come to an end, and she must have gone by the other. They hurried on to make up for the lost time, and soon decided by slight traces, observable only to the scouts, that Darromed had passed this way."

"Don't ask me how I know this," said Gilbert. "It is a part of my business to read the earth like a printed book, and I see in this bare rock, written as plainly as I care to read, that this is the road he took. This can't last much longer, either, for this path inclines upward and we are not far from the open air."

"It seems to me that we have traveled miles under the earth," said Clinton.

"Deed have we," said Pat. "Fifty av them, and Irish miles at that, and them's the longest miles we know anything about, being that St. Patrick measured them in his coach."

"We have not gone half a mile in all," replied the Guide. "That is, if we measure in a direct line. The circuit we have made is nearer a mile, but it is hard to measure distance in a place like this."

"Don't thry to fool me now," exclaimed Pat. "Sure and we've thraveled fifty mile, and long wans at that."

"No more than I say," persisted the Guide. "I ought to know something of the distance, for a great part of the later years of my life I have made use of such hiding-places as this."

"I suppose so; but look at this! As I live, here is another branch of the passage."

"And a good sign to go by," said the Guide, stooping at the entrance of the right-hand passage. "This girl certainly has her wits about her, for wherever she is likely to leave us at fault she has left a reminder. That looks like a trinket I have seen her wear upon her neck."

It was a small piece of amber, cut in the form of a Maltese cross, which Waterman at once identified as belonging to the lady, and it pleased him that she should be so thoughtful.

"Yes, yes," he said. "She trusts in us to follow and save her, but she does not know how close we are upon the trail, or how much this little token cheers us. It gives us a certainty that she has as yet been uninjured, and that she is cunning enough to outwit Darromed, though the scoundrel is no fool."

"Not he!" replied the Guide. "I know to my cost that he has the ferocity of the bloodhound, the cunning of a fox, and the untiring patience of a wolf. My heart beats strangely as I take this little cross in my hand, and I think that the darling girl has worn it on her neck."

"Come on, come on!" cried the young agent. "It is I who feel impatient now."

"You shall not accuse me of being slack in my duty," replied the Guide, quickly. "Forward!"

A few steps further they felt a current of fresh air blowing in their faces, and pushing on, they saw the star of evening, Venus, shining clear and bright above their heads.

They were at the bottom of a funnel-shaped ravine, containing in the circuit of its circumference perhaps a thousand yards. The sides were fresh and green, and bright flowers bloomed about their feet. Stepping so suddenly from that strange cavern-home under the light of the stars came like a shock to them, and for a moment every one paused to drink in the delicious atmosphere.

"It is a beautiful world," said Gilbert, "and looking upon such a scene as this, one can only think it strange that such a scene can be outraged by the strife and passion of man. And yet without doubt, this peaceful spot has been the witness of savage warfare, bloodshed and death. Here ends our work for to-night, as it is impossible to say which way the trail leads until morning."

"Must we lie idly here all night, knowing that every hour is placing a greater distance between us and Helen?" demanded Waterman, in an agonized tone.

"It is useless to go on," answered the Guide, "and yet the night shall not be lost, for I will go to the camp of Mack and tell him what we intend to do, and let him return to the fort. But, will you not be punished for leaving upon such an expedition without orders?"

"I have them already," answered Waterman. "Mine was always a roving commission, and Wayne told me that, after leaving Helen safely at the post, I should make it my business to examine into the state of the country east of the Miami, in which duty I was to call on you for assistance."

"Good; I am glad to know that you are not likely to get into trouble on account of this unfortunate affair. I will leave you now, and be off to camp."

"But you will get back in time, I hope."

"If I am not here before daylight you can go on without me, for I shall be dead or a prisoner."

"Let me go wid ye, Gilbert dear," said the Irishman. "Deed an' I don't like to stay here, knowing that maybe ye are in danger."

"Cease your prate, Pat," ordered the Guide, sternly. "Remember that you are under my orders."

"I don't forget it, avick," said Pat. "I'll keep my wurrud too, and obey ye in every thing, but it comes mighty hard at times, 'dade an' it does. I'd like right well av I might go wid ye widout breaking orthers."

"It is better not," said the Guide, more kindly. "One can do this duty as well as two, and there is really so little danger in it that I would let you do it if you knew the country well enough to travel in the dark."

"Jist as ye say, masther," said Pat, submissively; "but av ye don't come back sorra re-save me av I don't write me name in bloody letherers upon the back av any bla'g'ard Injins I mate from that time. Good-night til ye."

"Good-night, Pat," replied Gilbert. "The same to the rest. And Owasco, if I do not return, and there is always a possibility of loss, you will know what to do. Think of me as one dead, and go upon your duty like men, and never pause or falter."

The dark figure of the Guide was seen darting up the green side of the bowl-like valley in which they were ensconced, and it stood for a moment outlined against the sky, waved them a farewell and was gone. Handy Pat gave vent to a loud sniff of disapprobation as he turned his back to the others to cover his grief and sat down upon the turf rocking his body back and forth with that utter abandonment of grief of which only an Irishman is capable.

"Ochone, ochone! And now who will fight the battle or gain the day, whin the man we like so well is gone? Who so brave or so forrerd in danger, or so riddy to stand by a fri'nd as he? Wirra, wirrastru, but it's dead an' kilt I am wid graif."

"Don't take it so much to heart, Pat," said Waterman, kindly. "He'll keep his word and come back to us if he can."

"Yis, an' that's thru; if he can. But, how the devil can he aff the bloody Wyandots take him, the haythen rid naygurs?"

"Gilbert is very brave and cunning," said Owasco. "No fear that he will come to harm, for the Great Spirit is always near to watch over the children whom he loves."

"Do you think that Darromed will travel all night with Helen?" asked Waterman.

"No," replied Owasco, "white girl very brave, but she will be weary. He will give her rest until he can see the trail."

"Then we ought to catch him before many hours after daybreak."

"Perhaps yes, perhaps no; who can tell, since it is all as the Great Spirit wills."

He wrapped himself in his blanket and lay down at the root of a tree, and was soon asleep. Overcome by fatigue, Waterman followed his example, and did not wake until he felt a hand upon his shoulder, and opening his eyes with a start saw the Guide bending over him.

"Come!" commanded Gilbert; "it is time to be on our way."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE MEETING IN THE WOODS.

"Hurrah, hurrah! the dead ride past;
Don't fear, my love, the dead!
Oh, speak not of the dead!"

—BURGER'S LEONORA.

WATERMAN sprung up at once, and joined the others in a hasty meal, and before the sun had shown itself fairly above the Northern hills they were on their road following the trail like hounds upon a scent. Either the chief supposed that his precautions in the cave had made pursuit impossible, or he felt safe from proximity to his friends, for he had taken but little pains to hide the trail, and they could see his tracks plainly, and at times the marks left by the small feet of the girl. He turned toward the Miami and went on up the stream rapidly, with a fixed purpose to mislead pursuit. This the Guide read out to his friends from the signs upon broken twigs and bent leaves, and impressions upon the earth where the soil was soft. Waterman thought with undisguised grief of the terrible road through which the weary girl was wending her way, forced on by the implacable Indian.

A low, guttural exclamation from the Onondaga startled them just as they came in sight of the river, and they drew back out of sight,

peering out at a strange scene. The river flowed rapidly between precipitous shores, the water black as ink in the center of the channel, changing to a yellow shade near the shore, the effect of the limestone bed over which it flowed. In the midst of the channel, a hundred rods above them, they saw a light canoe, coming down at racing speed, borne by the resistless tide. Standing upon the bank, the Indian pointed to a silent figure seated in the stern, wrapped in a blanket, who wore upon his head the eagle-feathers of a chief, which waved in the summer breeze. A stern, upright, gallant-looking brave, whose face was turned toward the east, and whose eyes stared wide open and ghastly as he fled on. What surprised them most was the fact that at times the canoe swung entirely about in the rapid stream, and they could see that he made no use of a paddle, although one lay in the canoe in front of him, with a rifle and ammunition.

"He is doomed!" whispered the Guide. "Look at the rapids yonder, boiling with foam and full of jagged rocks. Why don't he take up the paddle and make for the shore?"

"Silence in the presence of the dead!" cried the Onondaga, who had been looking intently at the face of the Indian in the canoe. "Little does Neadawa care for the roaring water, for the terrible rocks, because his eyes cannot see and his lips are dumb. Do you not see that he is dead?"

"Neadawa! The only man among the Wyandots whom I ever spared, and who ever deserved any good at the hands of the white man. I have heard him say before now that when he died, he would go to the spirit-land in his own canoe, and with his gun and knife beside him."

"He was with Gandelion yesterday, and was very sick. Doubtless the Englishman has listened to the prayer of the chief, and has given him the burial he coveted."

Each man reverently uncovered his head, as all men with hearts in their breasts would do in the presence of a death like this. A hundred yards below the creek was a foaming rapid, bubbling down among the dark limestone rocks which reared their heads in the channel, throwing the spray high into the air, while the water rushed hither and thither, seeking everywhere for a channel by which to descend. Opposite the place where they stood the canoe struck an eddy and swung slowly round, revealing the set face and staring eyes of the dead warrior, and they could see that he was propped up by pieces of wood and fastened by buckskin thongs in such a way that he could not lose his balance. There was something so majestic in the attitude of the silent warrior that even the volatile Irishman was silent, and remained with uncovered head, gazing earnestly at the thrilling scene. As the eddy lost its power the canoe shot out into the current, shook like an aspen, and then flew with redoubled rapidity toward the yawning rocks below.

It was a moment of breathless suspense. The light craft neared the verge, trembled for a second upon the brink, and was gone. Gilbert drew a long, deep breath and turned away.

"A noble warrior gone to his rest," he sighed. "I, who hate the Wyandots with a deadly hate, who would be pleased to have my revenge upon the whole tribe at once, can think kindly of a man like that. Do not say that it is a strange and unaccountable whim which led him to seek a burial in these dark waters, for if you knew his story you would understand it. I, who speak to you, saw the tragic event which changed him from the light-hearted chief to the stern man he became, and it was upon this very spot. Look to the trail, Owasco, and I will tell Waterman the story as we go."

The chief took the lead and the others followed, and the Guide told the touching story of savage love, which did not lack in tragic interest because the actors were simple forestmen.

"It was ten years ago this very day," said the Guide, "that the event occurred. Owasco was but a boy, though even then my friend, and we were on a hunt in this section together. Neadawa loved a Miami woman who lived near the junction of East Creek with a Miami, in the village which you passed yesterday. For a pure Indian, she was the most beautiful girl I ever saw. She had seen the young chief when he came with a deputation from the Wyandots to make a treaty, when they thought of expelling the whites from the country. The peace was made, and nothing was said against her marriage with so celebrated a chief, but when war again broke out they were separated.

"Neadawa came to the Miami country, saw the girl, and induced her to fly with him. Coming to this place, they attempted to cross the stream in a canoe. Mara had already taken her place in it, and he was preparing to follow, when the canoe broke away and was whirled rapidly out into the stream. I stood upon yonder bare rock and saw her hold out her hands, screaming for the aid which could not come to her, and her frantic lover making vain attempts to reach her. We saw that his life would be lost as well as hers, and held him in spite of his anger. There she kneeled in the stern of the canoe, with flying hair and wild eyes, calling for us

to save her. But an attempt to reach her would have been madness. Yonder, at the place where the water turns from black to green, she seemed to nerve herself to meet death boldly; folding her arms, she turned a last farewell look at her lover, called his name, and made the fatal plunge. Human eyes never saw her again. Neadawa was from that hour a changed man, and though he still fought for his nation, no man ever saw him smile. And now, feeling death coming fast upon him, for he received a mortal wound in the last incursion of the tribe, he has come to this place to meet the same fate which was given to his darling."

The voice of Gilbert sunk low, and a sad look flitted across his face.

"I, too, had a wife I loved, but the sods of the valley have lain for many a year heavy on her breast. Poor darling, yours was a sad, sad fate."

"Your story is a sad one, too, I doubt not," said Waterman.

"Sad indeed. Some day, when I have the strength, perhaps I may tell it to you, and you will understand how terrible is the fate of that man who is alone in the world, the opening years of whose life were very happy."

"Hush!" whispered Owasco. "Stay here, and I will scout."

They drew back into the shadow of the bushes and remained silent, and the Indian glided away rapidly, with a quick but noiseless step.

Waterman had long ago learned the virtue of silence in time of danger, and Handy Pat was learning it fast, wishing, as he did, to win the good opinion of the Guide, who looked at him approvingly as he crouched below the bushes, one hand upon the turf and the other grasping the butt of a pistol, ready for instant use should the occasion require.

Owasco came back as silently as he went—so silently, indeed, that no one except the Guide knew that he was coming until he stood beside them.

"What is it?" whispered the Guide.

"Gandelion and his men are in the path," said Owasco, "and I cannot tell whether the chief is with them or not."

"I hardly think he would dare bring the girl here," said the Guide. "Confound the luck! why are they here to break the trail?"

"If Darromed is there, the maiden is safe; if she is not, they passed before Gandelion came, and are beyond him somewhere."

"Fate seems against us," murmured the young man. "Dare you go into the camp, Owasco?"

"Not by day," replied the Onondaga. "The white man does not love Owasco, for he has done too much for the Americans."

"Must we pass another night of suspense?"

"I am afraid so, unless Gandelion would respect a flag. It would be rather imprudent in us to undertake that, under the circumstances. I wish Morena were only here."

"She is," replied the chief.

"Did you see her in the camp?"

"The maiden sits by the side of Gandelion and listens to his words," replied Owasco, with downcast eyes. "She is very fair, and her voice is music when it sounds in the ears of Owasco. Who among the white men is so brave as Gandelion, and she will love him."

"Do you think so?" demanded Gilbert, in an uneasy tone. "I don't say anything against the boy, for he is a brave one; but can a man of his degree do justice to a woman in hers?"

"She is the daughter of a chief," replied Owasco, proudly. "Dare he shame her by a word or deed!"

"I don't think he would," answered Gilbert, "and I swear that I would have his life if he did. I am not yet so far gone that I cannot fire a pistol, and face a man upon the green sward, and so surely as he wrongs that devoted girl, I will have him out."

At this moment they heard a quick step, and a sweet voice singing a merry song, and they knew that it was Morena. The song she sung was a French air, a martial song, such a one as Maud sung when the squire heard:

"A voice by the cedar tree,
In the meadow and o'er the hall,
Singing a song that is known to me,
A passionate ballad, gallant and gay,
A martial song like a trumpet-call:
Singing alone in the morning of life,
In the happy morning of life and May,
Singing of men, that in battle array,
Ready of heart and ready of hand,
March with banner and bugle and fife,
To the death, for their native land!"

All kept their positions until she was just beyond their hiding-place, when Waterman started out in front of her, and the Guide behind. Her first movement was to bring her carbine to a level, directed full at the breast of Waterman, but when she saw who it was she quickly dropped the butt of the beautiful weapon to the earth, and leaned upon it. Standing there in her picturesque garb, with her eyes beaming with animation, her smiling lips half apart, and a flush stealing up under her brown skin, she looked so like Helen, that Waterman uttered a low cry of wonder.

"White men," she said, in a low tone, "why

are you here? Do you come to do an injury to Gandelion and his men?"

"I have no quarrel with him," answered the Guide. "We came to seek and save Helen Carlyon, who was not lost, after all, as I told you. I was deceived by appearances, and we found her afterward; but since then she has been taken prisoner by Darromed."

The girl darted impulsively forward, took the hand of the Guide and kissed it.

"You bring me happy news, my father!" she said. "I have been sad many times whenever I thought of the maiden, whom you thought so beautiful, but whom I did not see."

"Father!" said the Guide, raising his eyes to heaven. "She called me father, this sweet child. How long, oh, how long is it since I have heard that sweet name!"

"The people with whom I live have taught me to call men whose hair is getting gray by that name. Morena has sharp eyes and she can see that it is sorrow, more than years, which has made your hair white. But I do not love you less because you are not my father, for you have been very kind to me."

"Call me father always when you meet me," said Gilbert. "It brings sad memories to me, but it is sweet to hear that name again. I had daughters once who loved me, but I lost them."

"Oh!" said Morena, in a plaintive tone, "father, that is very sad, when we lose little children who love us, and whom we love. I will call you father because your hair has snow upon it, and because you are so tender when you speak of the little children you lost."

Gilbert pressed her hand again and again to his lips.

"I am forgetting myself," he said, at last. "In my own griefs, I must remember that others are sad. Is it safe to talk here, so near the camp?"

"I know that Gandelion would not willingly do you harm, for he laughed in the morning when he found that you had escaped in the night. He has a kind heart, and has done much for Morena."

"Let us go further away from the camp, however, as I wish to ask you some questions in regard to Darromed," said Gilbert.

They found a secure place among the rocks at some distance from the camp, upon a narrow shelf which ran close to the river bank, where they sat down.

"Has Darromed come to the camp since I left it?" he said.

"Yes; he came in this morning, and Gandelion was kind to him, for it is his business to look after the Indians. He had some evil in his mind as he talked, for when Darromed is angry his eyes turn green, and he speaks soft and low like a little child. Yet, even he has been very kind to me, ever since I came among the Wyandots. But I could see that he had something on his mind, though what it was I could not tell. He took some meat with him when he went away, and asked Gandelion for a little wine, which he said was for a comrade who was wounded, and needed it. Then Gandelion said he would send out men and bring the wounded man into camp, but he would not hear to it, because he said that the sight of white faces would drive him mad."

"Ha! I see through all this!" said Gilbert. "The fellow has taken Helen to some hiding-place and is keeping her a prisoner, and wanted the food and wine for her."

"Not a doubt of it in my mind," said Waterman, eagerly. "At least, he does not seem to treat her unkindly."

"He will not do that, as he doubtless has an object in getting her safe to his people," replied the Guide. "Did he say he was coming back?"

"Yes; he told Gandelion he would come at dusk to bring more food for the sick man, and he will do it."

Just then the Guide felt a hand upon his shoulder, and saw Owasco kneeling beside him on the rock and pointing downward. The river was visible for over a mile, and just at the point where it turned and was lost to view, they saw a figure standing, which, even at that distance, they could not mistake for any other. It was the chief, Darromed, standing in a statuesque attitude, looking down the stream. As they looked, they saw another figure come out from the shadow of the rock, and stand beside him.

"Helen!" cried Waterman, eagerly, stretching out his hands. "It is she!"

CHAPTER XV.

PLOTTING.

"Like the baseless fabric of a vision."

WHILE they stood gazing at the two figures the chief started, and seizing the girl by the waist by main strength dragged her back into the shadow of the rock, and they saw them no more. It was not probable that he had seen them, for he had been startled by something nearer at hand. However this might be, he was gone, and doubtless would hurry Helen to his secret hiding-place, wherever that might be. Evidently, too, he was quite alone, or he

would not have shown fear so readily, backed by the power of his fierce band."

"Why does he guard her so carefully?" muttered the Guide. "It is not the usual way with Darromed, for I know to my sorrow he cares but little for female prisoners, and would not hesitate to destroy one who cumbered him in the least, had he not some strong motive. One thing is decided, however, and that is that he has a hiding-place near at hand, in which he keeps her confined. Poor girl, how her heart must be torn each hour she remains in that cruel man's power. Let him look to himself, for there are those upon his track who are tireless and unforgiving. He ought to know me by this time, and that I am not one to falter or turn back."

"Let us hasten to her relief, and take her out of this cruel villain's power?" pleaded Waterman.

"I suppose you would rush in now and drive him to kill her, as he would certainly do if hard pushed, for he is a man to whom revenge is very sweet. No, no, Waterman; craft must meet craft, and cunning, cunning. Let us work, who have all our lives made it our study to pry into the wiles of the Indian, and to understand the deep guile of which he alone is capable. Not even the Hindoo is more subtle in his revenges than this Darromed, chief of the Wyandots."

"Why does he hate you so?"

"Because, through my means, he once received a severe but well-merited punishment, which he never forgot and terribly revenged. I wish I had let him escape, for that act has made my whole life very bitter."

"What do you propose to do?"

"I will tell you directly. Morena, come this way, for I wish to speak with you."

The Indian maiden followed him to one side, and they conversed eagerly and earnestly for a few moments, when Owasco was called to join in the conference. When it was finished Morena took up her carbine, which she had placed against a rock, and with a graceful gesture of farewell sprung up the mountain path and disappeared. At the same time Owasco tightened his belt, laid his rifle upon the rock, and taking another course, also left the place, while Waterman looked on doubtfully.

"You do not explain your intentions yet," he said. "Surely you will omit no means to save Helen from this scoundrel."

"I have taken an oath to save her or die with her," replied the Guide, "and you must permit me to say that I know how to work against a man like Darromed better than you do. Morena and Owasco are already at work, but even they can do nothing until Darromed returns to the camp of Gandelion."

"What is that body of men doing here?" inquired the young man, uneasily.

"I think they are here to watch their Indian allies and see that they do not go further than is deemed necessary by the English. There will be no child's play, now that they have rejected the terms of the peace commissioners."

"What are you going to do?"

"Follow me and you will know," was the answer, as the Guide lifted his own rifle and that of Owasco, and started up the path. Seeing the indecision upon the face of the young soldier, he turned upon him almost fiercely, throwing up his hand with an impatient gesture.

"You must have faith in me, or we can do nothing, sir. I have an oath to fulfill as well as you, and I am taking the best way I know. I would yield to you if I dreamed that you could think of a better plan, but I know that you cannot. Morena has promised to track this savage to his lair, and she can do so more safely than either of us, for I do not think he would dare do her any harm, for she is a power among the Indians. Once for all, will you obey me or not?"

"Yes," replied the young man, "and I beg your pardon for my indecision, and can only plead one excuse, my distress and anxiety."

"Enough. But your excuse, though a good one in most cases, will not work here, and I will not permit it to interfere with my plans."

"It shall not again, if I can control myself," said Waterman, humbly.

"You must control yourself, I say again. Only by calmness and circumspection can we hope to win the stake for which we are playing. The stake is a high one, and well worth careful play. I beg of you for her sake whom we have come here to serve to act as if you had no motive but that of common humanity, and we shall surely win. Now follow, as I charged you once before."

They found a cover among the limestone rocks, from which they could look down upon the camp of Gandelion, whose men were enjoying their seclusion as best they could. Some played at cards, others wrestled, or tried their skill at leaping; two or more couples of fencers were having a turn with swords, and Morena was standing with downcast eyes before Gandelion, who was leaning against a great boulder, talking with her. The merry laughter came to the men hidden among the rocks.

"The girl loves Gandelion, I believe, and surely, if he could turn his foolish pride out of

doors, he might do far worse among the women of his nation. Rich in beauties and graces, strong in her virtue, she is a bride worthy of a king."

"You think highly of this beautiful girl, and she deserves it at your hands. How these fellows make themselves at home."

"Gandelion always does that wherever he may be. I cannot help liking the man, though he is full of the most consummate impudence I ever read or heard of. He would beard an emperor, and pull a king by the nose, who chanced to vex him, and then offer him the choice of weapons."

"Faith he ought to be an Irishman," said Pat, with a chuckle. "I've seen gentlemen in Ireland walk up to another with a grin and say, 'Was it me ye meant that twist av the lip for?' Maybe he'd say yis; most likely he wud, anyhow, and thin, mayhap, next morning they'd parade wan another in the park they call the Phaynix, and pop at one another wid the little pistols. Many's the gentleman I've seen carried wid his fate foremost out of the Park into Dublin, and all the gossoons cryin', 'Huroo! here's another candidate for a grass quilt!' Faith an' it was a great diversion to me whin I were a lad."

"You Irishmen fight as a pastime, while most of other nations never fight from choice; I mean Christian nations."

"Sure an' ye don't call Irishmen Christians?" demanded Pat, with a queer twist of the mouth. "Anyhow they think over the Channel we are a set of philanderin' savages, good for naught but to ate praties and sour milk. But whin the time comes for a war, isn't it the illigant names they call us! By the tones of the O'Donabugh, but it's a puzzle to me how quick they change."

"You are a wit, Pat," said Gilbert, with a smile.

"Dade I'm not, for the praste called me a foolish gossoon, because I liked swate milk better than sour, and whisky better than another man. What wid the landlords, an' drivin' the cows an' pigs for the rint, an' the tithes an' taxes, it's a hard life a poor man has in Ireland, barrin' it's a market-day or a fair. I'd give a year av me life to see Donnybrook ag'in, an' have a set-to wid shillalabs wid Teddy Miles, the blacksmith. Sorra a one o' me ever will forget it an' how fire the hob-nails av his brogues looked whin they flew in il the air."

"Keep still, you rascal," said the other, laughing. "Here comes that scoundrel Darromed."

As he spoke the Wyandot appeared at the other side of the valley, coming down into the camp. At that distance there was something grand in the attitude of the savage, even though they knew him to be full of wicked thoughts. His erect figure, his bold eye, and the martial grace of his motions, had their effect even upon Gilbert, who had an innate reverence for muscular power, even when that power appeared in the person of his deadly enemy.

Gandelion rose from his position against the boulder, and gave a quiet glance at Morena, which told her of the presence of the stately chief, and she turned to meet him. The Indian advanced boldly, caring nothing for the fact that they had parted in anger, and greeted the young leader proudly.

"You have come back, chief," said the young man. "How is your sick companion now?"

"He is better," replied the chief, "and the angel of health has driven away the fever, and if he has good care he will do well. I have come for food that he may grow stronger and better, and take the war-path again against those who have tried to rob us of our country."

"I am with you in that, as you well know," replied Gandelion. "The Yankees must and shall keep out of the North-west country, if it is in the power of man to beat them. But they have sent out a general who is strong in war, and the end is yet far off."

"Mad Anthony is a great chief," replied the Indian, "and he will fight well. Many braves must press the earth before the war is over, but when it is ended the Indian shall possess again the land of his fathers. Who is strong in war like the great tribe, or able to stand in war against us? Woe to the white man when we dig up the hatchet and send the war arrow from tribe to tribe, from village to village, from man to man and call them to the feast of death. The vultures scent blood from far off, and I see them gathering from east and west, from north and south, to feast upon the bodies of the slain. But I waste breath; give me food for my friend, who is very sick."

"I will bring food for the friend of Darromed," said Morena, advancing, "for I would see him strong again."

Darromed looked at her with a sad expression in his dark eyes.

"Morena is not the friend to her people she once was," he said. "She has forgotten that the whole tribe have bowed down to her and loved her. When she was sick the people mourned; when she called they heard her voice and came to her as the wind comes at the call of the spirit of the storm. There will be sadness in the great nation when Darromed goes

back and says: 'Morena no longer loves her red brothers, and has taken the hand of the stranger.'"

"Darromed must not go back with a lie in his mouth," replied the maiden, angrily. "Morena has not forgotten the great tribe, and never will. They have been kind to her, they have loved her, and she will not forget them until sight and memory fail."

"It is well," said Darromed, somewhat mollified. "Then Morena will return to the great tribe and make them happy?"

"Where else can I find a refuge and a home?" answered Morena, sadly. "With your tribe I must live, with your tribe I must die. When I forsake you it will be when the people no longer love me and refuse to listen to my voice. I will now bring food to you, as I promised."

She turned away, and the chief leaned against a rock and conversed in low tones with Gandelion. There was a subtle gleam in his eyes which the Englishman did not like, and could not fathom, and was too careless of consequences to try to do so. In a few moments Morena returned, carrying a roasted partridge wrapped in fragrant leaves and a bottle of choice wine. An Indian followed, bearing a basket of coarse food, which he gave to the chief, who took the

on my head be it! Let us go back to the old Mahomedan motto, 'What will be will be.'

Little did he dream that the keen eye of Gilbert was at that moment looking down upon him from his eyrie among the rocks, and taking a careful observation of his camp. Not that Gilbert would have made any use of the knowledge so gained, at this moment, for he partly depended upon the young man to aid him in his search for Helen. The Irishman was jubilant over the idea of overlooking the camp of his enemies from that secure position, and with the natural hate of an Irishman of the poorer class for anything English, vented his spite in words:

"Arrah, til the devil wid ye, an' the likes av ye! Phat w'u'd I give to be among ye wid a shillalah in me fist? Whoop!"

"Oh, keep still, you villain!" hissed the Guide. "Do you want to spoil all? Give another yell like that, and I'll break your head with the butt of my rifle. So beware!"

CHAPTER XVI.

A TRYING HOUR.

MORENA had not followed the trail of the chief a dozen yards from the brow of the hill

"I will hide myself here, and watch," said the girl. "If you need help, I will come."

He said no more, but, loosening his hatchet in his belt, he stole down the rocky path to the river-bed. When he reached it, he could find no trace of those he sought. The bare limestone rocks had left no trail; and those he sought were securely hidden somewhere near at hand, though where it was he could not think. He stole with light foot up and down the platform, looking on every side for something which would betray to him the hiding-place of the chief and his victim. The limestone walls mocked him with their rough and jagged surface; and, although he was certain that some one of these rocky points concealed the entrance to their covert, he could not find it, and dared not make noise enough to call the attention of Darromed to his presence. Just in front of him the river dropped over a ledge eight or ten feet high, forming a beautiful little fall, and from that point ran down toward the higher falls below.

The Onondaga was puzzled, and furiously angry, as well. Where had his enemy hidden? If it had not been for Helen, he would have taunted him with his cowardice in hiding away from him, and perhaps by his irritating banter



WATERMAN DREW MORENA ASIDE, AND WHISPERED IN HER EAR THE HIDING-PLACE OF THE GIRL.

food and wine from Morena's hand, placed it in the basket, and stalked away as he had come. Scarcely was his form out of sight when Morena, after a few hurried words with Gandelion, took up her rifle and followed him at a quick pace, but with so light a step that no sound could be heard. A forest life had made her a scout second to none, and the young leader looked after her beautiful figure with admiring eyes.

"Why do I hesitate?" he thought. "I have found here a woman beautiful and pure as an angel, and one who would love me truly and tenderly all my life. She is my ideal woman—the one of whom I have dreamed all my days, and yet I hesitate and draw back. Cursed be the social laws which divide like from like; cursed be that pride of rank which keeps me out of the light and makes me fear to do justice to myself and to her. The sweet child trusts me, in her purity and goodness, but at an impure look or word she would turn from me as from a serpent. I dare not speak that word; I should despise myself if I did, and yet—my comrades! How they would laugh if they knew that Herbert Gandelion, the pet of the British Grenadiers, the heir of proud estates, loved a simple Indian maiden in this way! Yet I would lay that man dead at my feet who dared to offer her an insult, and would sooner have her for my wife than any beauty I have ever met in my wandering and adventurous life. 'Bishmillah;

when she was joined by the Onondaga, whose eyes were flashing with excitement, for an Indian on the trail becomes a different being from the Indian in repose, and the young warrior's mobile countenance lighted up and became full of intelligence. They followed the trail together up the shining river, for, though the chief had taken some pains to cover his trail, his disguise was nothing to the keen eyes of the Onondaga—up the river, with his eyes upon the ground and his hand ever upon a weapon, until they came at length to a place where a rocky path led down to the river's edge, near the place where they had seen Helen and Darromed.

"You have done enough, woman of the great heart," said the Onondaga, in a whisper. "Turn back and leave me to work my way into the den of the snake."

"No, no," said Morena. "I am not a coward, and I will not turn back."

"Listen: it is not good that Darromed should know that you are his enemy," said the Onondaga. "What is it to me? I have left my tribe and wandered far from the graves of my fathers, and Captain George is chief on the soil which our father at Washington has given to the tribe in that land. They are happy, and work upon the land like white men. I cannot do that, but I am glad that my tribe will learn war no more. Go back and let me do the work to which I am called."

have induced him to leave his lair. But he knew enough of the sanguinary disposition of his enemy to be certain that he would destroy his beautiful prisoner sooner than suffer her to be taken away by her friends. After a little, the Indian stole back to the place where he had left Morena, and called her.

"Go back on the trail," he said, "and meet Gilbert and the rest. Say to them that they must come, for Darromed is too cunning for me, and dives like a mole into the earth. While you are gone I will watch, and if Darromed comes I will kill him as I would a dog, and then shall the white girl come forth, and you shall see her face, fair as the snow upon the hillsides when the winter is upon the earth. Go quickly and bid them come, and then we will find the maiden. And if, before you come again, it is my fate to fall, remember sometimes the Onondaga, and that he was faithful to his friends."

Morena gave him her hand with an impulsive gesture; he pressed it slightly, and the next moment she was gone, vanishing up the rocky path, beside the Miami. Owasco found a covert among the rocks commanding a view of the platform below, and there he lay, silent and stern, waiting for the slightest motion upon the part of his enemy. As he lay there, he became conscious of a stir upon the other side of the stream, and then Indian after Indian began to steal down the bank, until forty

or fifty were collected upon the narrow platform upon the other side. The river at this point was barely a hundred and thirty feet wide, but ran with bewildering swiftness between its banks, while a heavy float of logs, forty feet wide, had collected in the eddy, close to Owasco. The Indians did not seem to think of swimming, for they squatted about on the banks, looking carefully along the high shores of the stream, to see if any men were lurking there.

All at once their attention seemed to be called to some object upon the face of the rock close to the place where the water touched it. The chief, looking down, caught a glimpse of a brown hand waving, and saw at once that the man he had sought was concealed there in a place where he had not thought of looking. From the opposite bank the hiding place was plainly visible, and was simply a hole in the limestone face, some seven or eight feet wide and perhaps ten deep, worn out by the action of water. In this place the chief had hidden Helen, bound hand and foot, and gagged, so that she had heard the stealthy footsteps of the Indian overhead, and could not call out to apprise him of the secret of her hiding-place, which only became visible from above by bending far over the verge of the platform, when the blow of a hatchet would doubtless have settled scores between the two chiefs forever. While Owasco roamed up and down the platform, Darromed sat below, with a terrible smile upon his face, his rifle beside him primed and ready, and his hatchet in his hand, waiting to see if the Onondaga dare show himself. Fortunately for the latter, he did not find out the covert, or his doom was sealed.

Darromed made signals to the rascals upon the other shore, and they understood it at length. Close to the river-bank, not five feet from the verge, grew a pine, perhaps a hundred and fifty feet in height, with a remarkably small trunk for so high a tree. The Indians, who were nearly all Wyandots, quickly set to work with their hatchets to chop this tree down, and in an incredibly short space they had succeeded in their object, and the pine came thundering down across the float, skillfully directed in its course by the Indians, so that it completely bridged the stream to these logs. Owasco began to understand now what all this meant, and he threw forward his rifle, prepared to take a shot at the chief when he should make his appearance. The tree had fallen beautifully and lodged hard and fast, but the mighty current was pressing upon it in the center, and it already described the arc of a circle.

All at once Darromed bounded from his hiding-place upon the logs with a shrill yell, bearing Helen in his arms. But he held her in such a way that it was impossible to shoot at him without danger to her. He knew that, if her friends were lying in wait for her, they were men who could shoot straight and sure, and that he was doomed if either Owasco or Gilbert pulled on him over the deadly barrel of the rifle. But no man, who had any feeling for the poor girl he held a prisoner in his arms, would have dared to fire now, no matter how good a marksman he might be.

Darromed saw his advantage, and stopped, with one foot upon the fallen tree-top, and Helen still held up before him as a shield, and shouted in derision. Then, with a bold, free step, he ran out upon the swaying tree, and facing round quickly, with Helen still upon his arm, he called aloud.

"Who lies in wait among the rocks for the son of the Thunder? Let him show himself, that the braves may laugh and send him home to his lodge."

Owasco sprung out at once, and stretched out his hand to the chief. "Come back, Darromed, if you are not a dog, and fight with me! Whoever conquers, the white girl shall be his. Come back, or I will shoot."

"Shoot, then!" yelled Darromed. "Fool! do you not see that the first shot will plunge the white girl deep into the black water?"

The rifle dropped from the uplifted hand of Owasco, and he stood trembling, looking down at his enemy, now free from all danger from him. He could slay Darromed, it is true, but what was he to gain by so doing, and how much to lose? The same ball which sent the Wyandot to his account would plunge into a certain and terrible death the beautiful girl he wished to save. Darromed laughed in horrible glee as the tree bent and swayed, and still kept his place, jeering at Owasco. All the mad passions of the savage seemed aroused, and twice he raised Helen high above his head, as if to cast her into the flood which boiled below.

The Onondaga knew that he dared not do that; but he picked up his rifle again just as the Wyandots discharged a poorly aimed volley, which rattled against the rocks all about him.

"Fools!" hissed Darromed, whose fun was cut short by the volley. "Do you want Gandelion to come upon you with his braves?"

"Who fears Gandelion?" cried one of the braves. "He is not a friend of McKay, the father of the Indians."

Darromed had passed the center of the river when a loud and angry crack was heard, and the log was broken by the force of the current,

and the part upon which he stood dropped into the water so suddenly that he was thrown from it, but managed to catch one of the hanging branches and drag himself close to the trunk, still clinging to his victim with an eager hand. The log with its living burden, swung swiftly round, and started down the stream between the rocky banks, followed by a cry of rage and despair from the lips of Owasco, who saw at once the terrible peril of Helen. The chief had drawn himself up on the log, which, with its hanging branches, could not turn over, clasping the fainting girl by the waist, and casting looks of demoniac fury at the Onondaga as he swept by.

Fate seemed to do its worst to Helen since the day when she had left her father at the fort. No sooner had she escaped one danger than another of greater magnitude stared her in the face. The banks seemed to fly past them as they sped down the angry flood, and Darromed, seeing their danger, cast off the bonds from the hands and feet of his captive, and told her to cling to the log, while he had a chance to look about him. Just as he did this a branch which pointed downward began to scrape upon the bottom of the channel, which was shallow in places, and the log turned slowly in the rushing tide, and one end swung in toward the bank. An Indian ran down with a long lariat in his hand, which he cast with great skill, so that the end fell upon the outstretched hand of Darromed, who made it secure to a knot in the log. Such, however, was the terrible force of the current, that the powerful savage who held the lariat was being slowly dragged into the water, when half a dozen of his companions ran to his aid, and together succeeded in checking the onward course of the raft, and then they began to haul it rapidly toward the shore, while Darromed again seized Helen by the waist and waited.

Quick steps sounded in the ears of Owasco, and the Irishman, the agent and Gilbert came on at a rapid run and joined him. At the sight which met his gaze Helen's lover covered his face with his hands in agony.

"Look there! look there!" he cried. "Will no one aid her? Unhand me, Gilbert! Do you think I will let her perish before my very eyes?"

But the Irishman held him upon one side and Gilbert upon the other, and together succeeded in detaining him. They knew that he must only throw away his life if he attempted to cross that dark stream, and could give Helen no aid. Meanwhile, with low cries of triumph, the savages were dragging the log to land, when a loud crack sounded, and the end of the lariat dropped into the water. Unable to stand the strain upon it, it had parted near the center, and the log was again at the mercy of the stream. What could save them now? They were in the midst of the most rapid current, and below them, scarcely a hundred yards, was a dangerous rapid, full of rocks, which reared their brown heads threateningly in the air.

As they held their breath in unutterable horror they saw Darromed rise to his feet upon the log, still clasping Helen's waist, and brace himself as if for a spring. At this point an eddy ran in toward the bank, and the log again swung round, so that the end was hardly ten feet from the shore. They saw Darromed make a sudden rush and leap. Starting from such an insecure footing, and holding the weight of the now senseless girl in his arms, it is no wonder that he did not reach the bank, nor did he expect it. The log swept on, and left him floating in the powerful eddy, exerting all his strength to keep himself afloat, when his friends rushed down the bank to his aid. A lariat was thrown, and by its help he was dragged out of the water, and Helen was lifted by half a dozen strong hands.

Darromed busied himself at once in her recovery, and soon had the satisfaction of seeing her open her eyes slowly and look about her with an expression of wonder and doubt.

"Where am I?" she gasped. "I forgot what has passed, but I know that it was horrible. Ah, that face!"

"Peace, white maiden," said the chief. "Rest, for you have passed a great danger, from which you were saved by the strong arm of Darromed."

"Silence!" replied Helen, beginning to comprehend her position more fully. "You it was who brought me into this danger; who have stolen me from my friends, and now refuse to lead me back to them."

"A white woman has a long tongue and knows how to use it," retorted the chief, coolly. "Among our people, the women listen while the braves speak. You must forget that you are white, for from this day you are the daughter of the Wyandot! You shall live among them all your life, learn their ways, love their sports and games, and be the wife of a chief."

Helen looked at him with an expression of utterable horror.

"Live in your tribe I will not, if knives are sharp or water will drown!" she cried, starting to her feet, in anger, and forgetting her weakness. "I know you, black-hearted chief! mur-

derer of women! I have heard men speak of your evil deeds, until your name is a terror to the children."

"Wagh! It is good to know that white children tremble at the name of Darromed. They shall tremble more before all is done."

"Return me to my people!"

"The white girl is a fool, after all," was the stern response. "Does she think that an Indian gives up the prey which he has grasped? Will the eagle yield the fish he has taken from the hawk to the carrion crow? Darromed will not listen to foolish words. White girl, the doom of your land is spoken. White men have insulted and trampled upon the Indian for many years, and now the tribes have dug up the hatchet and cry aloud for revenge. In a few suns not a white smoke will rise from the Miami to the Ohio, and the lodge of Darromed will be full of scalps."

"Bloodthirsty wretch!"

"Let the white girl look to herself. I am not a dog, to hear such words as these and not grow angry. Wait, while I speak a word with those who have dared to follow the trail of Darromed."

He advanced boldly to the bank of the stream, facing the place upon which he supposed his enemies to be concealed.

"Let Owasco come out and speak to Darromed, chief of the Wyandot!" he shouted.

"Owasco is here," and the Onondaga answered the summons. "What does the wolf-hound of the Wyandot say?"

"You have followed the trail of a great chief long, but your arms are not strong enough to take the White Flower from the hands of a Wyandot. I have chosen her from many for myself, for she is beautiful as Morena, Queen of the Lake."

"Look, Darromed; dare you come out and fight me like a man?"

"Yes."

"Will you fight me now?"

"No."

"A coward lurks in the skin of a Wyandot. Go; you are a squaw—a dog—a skunk!"

With a mad cry, the Wyandot brought his rifle to a level with his breast, and fired. But a quicker eye than his had been watching him, and another rifle cracked at the same second with his own. Darromed felt a sudden pang, as if a bar of hot iron had been thrust through his elbow, and his arm dropped nerveless to his side. Gilbert had seen that he was fingering his rifle nervously during the conversation, and that he would take a pretext for firing at Owasco, whom he so feared and hated, and therefore the Guide had remained with his rifle cocked, watching the scoundrel keenly. At the first motion to raise his weapon, Gilbert's was at his shoulder, and he aimed to hit the bone of the right arm between the elbow and wrist. The howl of pain which came back told that he had at least partially succeeded, and the rifle of Darromed dropped, with a ringing sound, upon the hard rock. Owasco started slightly, and put his hand to his shoulder, which had been raked by his enemy's bullet, inflicting a rather annoying wound.

Darromed staggered back and seemed about to fall; but he recovered and shook his un wounded hand at the party on the bluff, while his men ran forward and poured in a rattling volley, at which the others disappeared at once behind their rocky rampart, without returning the fire. Darromed shouted some order to his men, and four of them lifting Helen in their arms, turned to carry her away.

"Help me, good friends!" she wailed. "Let some friendly bullet end my misery."

"Trust to us, little 'un!" cried Gilbert. "We won't forget you, while we have life."

As he spoke, the whole force of Indians passed over the rock, with the party carrying Helen in the rear, while her lover gave a great cry of agony, as if all hope was gone.

CHAPTER XVII.

MORENA'S WARNING.

THREE weeks had passed since the day when Darromed escaped, carrying with him the beautiful white girl to a hopeless captivity. In the mean time, Wayne had not been idle. In his progress through the country, he had built forts at every available point, until he had at last reached the rapids of the Miami, now known as the Maumee. It was at this place that the Indians had agreed to meet the commissioners of that year; but stirred up by the English Indian agent, Colonel McKay, they had refused to do so, and made war a necessity. No man could have been better chosen for the duty than Anthony Wayne, the hero of Stony Point, the man of many battles. Yet he did not press the conflict at once, but held out offers of reconciliation to the savages, even to the end. But they had not yet tasted blood sufficiently, and the artful counsels of McKay and such chiefs as Darromed prevailed with the younger portion of the braves, and they were hot for war.

Wayne was in his tent, in his camp above the rapids, looking over dispatches, when an orderly came in and saluted his general.

"Well, Watkins?"

"An Ingin gal, general, sez she must see you. Told her it was out of natur' in an ignerant critter like her to want to see the general, but she would have it, and here she be."

"You may admit her," said Wayne, carelessly. "I wonder what she wants here?"

The orderly appeared again, and brought into the tent Morena. The general looked up, indolently, but actually rose in surprise as he saw the lovely face and form of the girl, and brought forward a seat, and gave it to her, with a courtly grace, which was a part of the education of a gentleman of the old school. Morena was won by his noble and commanding air, and took the camp-stool he offered her, with a graceful gesture of thanks.

"I hardly hoped to be favored with a visit from a lady in my camp," said Wayne, politely. "My blundering orderly said an Indian girl wished to see me, and then brought you in. What wonder if I was taken by surprise?"

"Your orderly spoke the truth, general," replied Morena. "An Indian girl I am, of the great Wyandot tribe, and come to warn you."

"Of what?" said Wayne.

"Danger, great and terrible. The chiefs are putting you off with specious words, in order to see what is necessary to be done preparatory to a grand attack upon you, with the design of cutting you off as they did Harmar and St. Clair. The Big Whirlwind* has his eyes open, but he may close them for a little sleep, and in that hour the enemy will come upon him like a thief in the night, and steal away his life."

"If this is true—and I can well believe it—how is it that you, a woman of the Wyandots, have come here to warn me?"

"My mission is one of peace," replied Morena. "Perhaps your braves have told you of Morena, called the Queen of the Lake."

"They have indeed told me of what wonderful woman, but I have never seen her."

"I am Morena," said the girl, quietly, "and I have done all I could to keep down the bad passions of Darromed and the rest, when they strike the war-post. But, a woman's word is naught when the war-trumpet sounds and the eagles of war are gathering. I have heard the warriors preparing for the battle, and the sharpening of hatchets and knives. In the deep forest they have set up their watch-fires, and danced about them until morning."

"What tribes are in the confederacy which is opposed to me?"

"Why should I name them? Where the Shawnees and Wyandot lead, the rest will follow. They have said, 'Let us lull him to sleep with soft words, and then come in the night and take his scalp with many more, and hang them on our lodge-poles.'"

"They may find it more difficult to perform that little operation than they imagine," and the general smiled. "I am here on their old battle-ground, in the place where they beat St. Clair and Harmar, and I will avenge them, too, unless the Indians sue for peace. How did you come here?"

"In a canoe."

"While you were away, did you see anything of some men of mine who are missing? Four in all: an Indian agent named Clinton Waterman, Gilbert, the Guide, an Indian of the Onondaga nation, and an Irishman called Pat O'Driscoll, who went out on an expedition three weeks ago, while I was coming up from the East, and have not been heard from."

"I have seen them," replied Morena, and recounted the events which had brought them together, and the dangers they had passed, modestly keeping back as much as possible of her own share in it.

"Who is this Gandelion of whom you have spoken once or twice? From what you said he must be an Englishman. What right has an English armed force upon our soil?"

"This is the Indian country," replied Morena, stamping her foot. "It is wrong that you should take away our land and then laugh at us. I am for peace, but not for wrong."

"We will not argue that now," replied Wayne, pleasantly. "I question the right of an Englishman upon this soil, and by that I mean south of the chain of great lakes. We fought England to gain certain rights, which we did obtain, and the line between the United States and Canada was the line of the lakes. South of that an English force is an insult to my country."

"If the Indians choose to invite their English brothers into the country, they can do so."

"It will not do, and I am here to fight, not to argue. I have been bred a soldier, and my ways are rough and rude, but for all that I hope they are not such as to frighten you, my pretty forest flower."

"A man who has earned a great name as a soldier justly, cannot wrong a woman," replied Morena, with ready tact. "Once more, let me tell you, do not trust the deceitful words of the chiefs, and watch them night and day. Double your guards and do not let your vedettes sleep, for in an hour when you think not, they may come. The Shawnee is very wise and sly;

and they have great chiefs in the Delaware nation; neither is Darromed, of the Wyandot, a child."

"Once more in regard to my men. They are in the Indian country yet: can you tell me where?"

"Somewhere upon the river, a few miles above. They are searching for the white girl called Helen, and they have sworn an oath never to turn back until she is saved from the hands of Darromed."

"Do you know where she is?"

"No; Darromed has hidden her somewhere, and does not go after her. I do not think he has chosen her for himself, but for another, who has seen and loved her, perhaps one of the white officers at Detroit."

"You speak English well. Who was your teacher, if I may ask?" said Wayne.

Morena told him of the kindness of the lady at York and Detroit, and how she had taught her all she knew of civilized life. She had never associated much with the women of her tribe. Her high position as a priestess and prophetess had given her the right to look down upon the others, and only a favored few were permitted to be near her.

"You are a brave girl. Will you promise me, if you find out the secret of Helen's hiding-place, for I know her well, that you will come at once to me and tell me where she is?"

"I will, if I can," replied Morena. "The warriors and chiefs know that I love peace, and suspect me, and I cannot come often. You will conquer in the coming battle, for you go into it with open eyes and a brave heart. When you are conqueror, promise me that you will not be too hard upon my tribe, for many of them are for peace, even among the chiefs."

"I promise, and I never break my word. Must you go now?"

"Yes; when the attack is decided on, I will give you a signal. If you see a fire upon the top of yonder hill at any time, you will know that upon the night following the warriors will attack you. I will light the fire with my own hand."

She glided from the tent as quietly as she had entered it, leaving the general rapt in admiration of her beauty and grace. Her canoe lay upon the bank, and entering it, she took up the paddle and glided gracefully down the current, watched by the soldiers of Wayne, who had never seen so rare a specimen of forest beauty before. A turn in the river shut her out from their view, and the general turned with a puzzled look to Colonel Campton, one of his bravest leaders, and said:

"Who does she remind you of, colonel? I can't get it out of my head that I have somewhere seen her living counterpart."

"No one can equal her except La Belle Helen, as the soldiers call her, who was lost last month upon the river."

"That is it!" cried the general, clapping his hands. "You have given me the clew, at length. Think a moment, and you will say that no two beings ever resembled each other more than this Indian princess and Helen."

"By Heaven you are right!" responded the colonel, in an excited tone. "Whence comes this extraordinary resemblance?"

"Who can say? It is enough for me that Morena has given me a warning I can not help believing, and I know that the Indians meditate an attack upon us."

"Did she come to warn you?"

"Certainly she did, and that at the peril of her life, for I know that Darromed would not hesitate to kill her if he thought she had dared to betray him."

"Such a girl has no business in an Indian village. She has qualities which might justly adorn any home, no matter how lofty. What do you propose doing?"

"Prepare at once for the assault. The savages may come at any moment, and they shall not surprise me as they did Harmar and St. Clair, who led their men into the wilderness only to sacrifice them. You will take a flag and go once more to the chiefs at their station below the rapids. Say to them that I have exhausted every peaceful measure without receiving any response from them. Further measures of this kind are useless, and the United States will no longer be insulted with impunity. The time for action has come. Ha! look there."

Upon the crest of the hill at which Morena had pointed, a fire blazed up, flickered a moment, and disappeared.

"That means that we are to be attacked to-night," said the general. "Go, and perform the duty I have intrusted to you."

Colonel Campton took a flag and went down the river in a canoe. He was gone but a few hours when he returned with an evasive answer calculated to gain time. Wayne at once gave the order to march, and in an hour the legion was in motion, on the right of the column, its left covered by the river. A brigade of mounted volunteers, commanded by General Todd, occupied the left of the line, while the remaining volunteer regiment, commanded by Barbie, occupied the rear.

From these mounted volunteers Wayne had selected a number of rangers and Indian-fight-

ers, who formed the advance-guard, and received orders to keep sufficiently in advance to give timely notice for the troops to form in case of an attack.

In this order they proceeded, and five miles from Fort Defiance the rangers received so close and severe a fire from the enemy, who were secreted in the high grass and ferns, that they were compelled to retreat in some disorder. The legion, upon the sound of the rifles, immediately formed into two lines, mainly covered by a thick wood which stretched away for some miles on the left, and some distance in front. The ground was very difficult, covered with fallen timber, the work of a tornado which had lately passed over the place, and it was impossible for cavalry to be of much use, while it protected the enemy stationed in the rear.

The savages were led by men who had before taught them how to achieve victory, and were formed in three lines, within supporting distance of each other, and extending at right-angles with the river, a distance of nearly two miles.

This was their old battle-ground, upon which they had before met and driven back the army of the Republic, and their efforts were now directed to the task of turning the left of the army.

The order was sent back for the second line to advance and support the first, with the whole force of mounted volunteers, most of whom had wrongs to revenge upon the bloodthirsty savages. Major-General Scott, with his command, were ordered to advance and endeavor to turn the right of the enemy.

As they were about to advance, a man covered with dust and blood rushed into the presence of Wayne. Ragged and blood-stained as he was, the general knew that it was his favorite guide, Gilbert.

"Now, sir," cried the general, "why don't you speak?"

"Is General Scott ordered to turn the right of the enemy?" gasped the Guide.

"Yes."

"Then I must go with him; I must, general! Darromed is there, the enemy whom I have sought through all these years, and I must and will be there to oppose him. Do not say that I can not, general."

"You may go," replied Wayne, briefly; "and I am glad to see you. No man knows the ground as well as you do, or can guide the troops so surely."

Gilbert placed himself at the head of the advanced brigade to turn the enemy's right, and away they went by a circuitous route, through tangled bushes and rocky paths, and at length reached a place within striking-distance of the Indians. At the same moment their bugles sounded the charge, Mad Anthony rose in his stirrups and gave the order to his men to advance with trailed arms and sweep the woods with the bayonet.

Ob, the wild charging-cheer! It can never be forgotten by the actors, even when their locks are growing gray.

At the first sound of the bugle, the first line was in motion, and with trailed arms pressed on to the charge. Indians never stand the push of the bayonet, and at that wild cheer they rose and delivered a hasty and irregular fire which did little damage, and hardly checked for a moment the impetuous charge. As the Indians rose, like birds in the cover, the legion, even while upon the charge, paused long enough to pour in a close and murderous fire, and then:

"Charge bayonets!"

The bright steel gleamed in the sun—the invincible steel with which Wayne conquered at Stony Point. So impetuous was the charge that the Canadian militia and their Indian allies would not stand against it.

A portion of Scott's men were thundering away on the right; Captain Campbell, at the head of the legendary cavalry, was sweeping up on the left. It was too much for the faint-hearted militia, who did not stand the shock half so well as the Wyandots and Shawnees, who fought with the fury of demons.

Darromed was there, painted to the waist, eager for the fray, and fighting with wild valor in front of his men. Gilbert strained every nerve to get near him. Thrice they reached each other in the conflict, and as many times were separated in the rush of charging men.

At last they joined again, fierce and bloody, the Guide having no weapon except the barrel of a broken rifle, and the savage armed with knife and hatchet.

"I have spared you many years, Darromed," cried the Guide; "but your time is come. Tell me where you have concealed Helen, or as the Lord liveth, you life is this day ended."

Darromed, without answer, threw himself desperately forward. Gilbert made a single retrograde step, and whirled the broken rifle above his head. Vain was the interposition of knife and hatchet against that terrible blow. He went down as surely as if beaten down by a thunderbolt. Gilbert stood over him a moment with blazing eyes, when there was a rush of savages from the thicket, and half a dozen men assailed him at once, fierce, relentless—

* An Indian name for Anthony Wayne.

their painted faces and blood-stained forms closing in upon him with savage yells.

Gilbert raised his bar, and at one swoop, the two foremost savages dropped senseless to the earth. Then, with a snarl, like a tiger, he rushed in among them, dealing blows with wonderful force.

"Oonah!" was the cry, as they fled before him, they who had dared to come between him and his revenge.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE POISONED SHAFT.

On all sides the battle still raged, and the Americans performed prodigies of valor. In number, those actually engaged upon the American side could not have been more than nine hundred, while opposed to them were over two thousand men, nearly all of them the pick and choice of ten tribes, and gallant warriors, whose valor had been tried upon many fields. They were desperately contesting every inch of ground, fighting with the stubborn valor which was inherent to their natures, and yet in heart feeling that they were no match for the trained legion of Wayne.

Campbell, turning their flank, was shot down; Van Rennsalaer shared the same fate, and Lieutenant Covington took command of the dragoons. Two Indians who threw themselves in his way were cut down by his own hand. The Indians were assailed at the same moment upon the front and both flanks, and at length they began to be demoralized, and broke up into inextricable confusion. Their flight through the woods being cut off, they were forced to take to the river, and in crossing the prairie to reach this they suffered fearful loss at the hands of the dragoons. In the hot pursuit, the savages were even pursued into the stream by the horsemen and there were slaughtered. The field was strewn on every side by the dead bodies of the Indians and their white allies, nor did the pursuit cease until the savages had found shelter under the very walls of the fort which the British had built in this place. The British officers were spectators of the closing scenes of the battle, which took place under their noses, but the garrison saw fit to remain passive spectators of the battle, although nothing would have better suited the ardent Wayne than to have them take such a share in the combat as would enable him to charge the fort and take it at the point of the bayonet. But the commandant of the station chose rather to regard the matter as a very surprising thing indeed, and made no movement while for three days the army of Wayne was within easy distance of the fort, destroying not only the improvements and property of the savages, but the houses and stores of Colonel McKay, the British agent, who had been the principal cause of the war. It was a fact well understood that these stores had been accumulated at this point by, and were the property of, the British nation, and had been brought here to sustain the Indians in their war against the United States.

General Wayne, accompanied by his officers, made a survey of the fort and found it a regular military work of great strength, the front covered by the wide river and five guns mounted. The rear, which was easiest of access by nature, had two strong bastions defended by eight pieces of artillery, with horizontal pickets extending from the parapet over the ditch. From the bottom of the ditch to the top of the parapet it measured twenty feet. About the work was a strong abatis, furnished with a numerous garrison, yet Wayne could hardly restrain the desire to storm it.

His careful inspection of the works brought forth the following note from the British commandant:

"Miami river, Aug. 21, 1794.

"SIR:—An army of the United States of America, said to be under your command, having taken post on the Miami for upward of the last twenty-four hours, almost within reach of the guns of this fort, being a post belonging to his majesty, the king of Great Britain, occupied by his majesty's troops, which I have the honor to command, it becomes my duty to inform myself, as speedily as possible, in what light I am to view your making such near approaches to this garrison. I have no hesitation upon my part to say that I know of no war existing between Great Britain and America.

"I have the honor to be, sir,

"Your most obedient and humble servant,

"WILLIAM CAMPBELL,

"Major commanding 24th Reg't."

To this note Wayne at once returned the following characteristic reply:

"Camp on the Miami, Aug. 21, 1794.

"SIR:—I have received your letter of this date, requiring of me the motive which has moved the army under my command to the position they now occupy, far within the acknowledged jurisdiction of the United States of America.

"Without questioning the authority, or the propriety, sir, of your interrogatory, I think I may, without breach of decorum, observe to you, that were you entitled to an answer, the most full and satisfactory one was announced to you from the muzzles of my small arms, yesterday morning, in the action against the horde of savages in the vicinity of your post, which terminated gloriously to the American arms, but, had it continued until the Indians, etc., were driven under the influence of the post and guns you mention, they would not much

have impeded the progress of the victorious army under my command, and no such post was established at the commencement of the present war between the Indians and the United States.

"I have the honor to be, sir,

"Your most obedient and humble servant,

"ANTHONY WAYNE,

"Maj-Gen. and Commander-in-chief of the Federal Army."

These letters were written upon the day following the battle in which Darromed fell under the powerful arm of Gilbert the Guide. Upon returning to look for the body of his foe, it was nowhere to be seen. Either he had managed to crawl away during the struggle or had been so mutilated by the hoofs of horses and the tramp of men that he was unrecognizable, as they searched in vain for the body. Satisfied that the battle would terminate gloriously for the Americans, the Guide withdrew from the conflict, and casting himself down upon the turf in a secluded dell, covered his face with his hands and moaned like a child in agony, his whole frame quivering with emotion.

"God knows I have not willingly broken my vows," he murmured. "I swore never to leave the pursuit of Helen, but the great calamity which overtook my comrades turned me back against my will. I am alone; Owasco, the gallant companion of many perils, the chivalrous Waterman, and poor, misnamed Handy Pat, are gone. Which way shall I turn, what shall I do, to save myself from the fate of the oath-breaker? But I will not go back. The path is before me, and I will tread it to the end."

"Peace or war?" said a stern voice.

Gilbert bounded to his feet and found himself face to face with Gandelion, his quondam friend, who laughed lightly as he saw who opposed him.

"Ha, my Knight of the Flying Wings," cried the young soldier, gayly. "I give you good-day. As I live I am glad to see you, although you did give me the slip so shabbily the other night. I must crave your help in a little matter here."

"You are wounded," said Gilbert, anxiously. "I hope not badly."

"I still live," replied Gandelion, in the same tone as before, holding up his bleeding right arm. "One of your dragoons yonder, in an unskilled attempt to cut off my head, only succeeded in mutilating me in the manner you behold. Are you surgeon enough to stop the bleeding?"

"Let me see," said the Guide, taking the wounded member in his own. "Rather a bad cut, you must allow, but I think I can manage it somehow."

He opened his pouch and took out something without which he never took to the woods, a large needle and some thread and a quantity of linen cloth, cut into strips. A small creek ran close to them, and taking a large mussel shell from the bottom, Gilbert scooped up a little water and carefully washed the blood from the wound. Then, threading his needle, he drew the edges of the wound together, and sewed it as neatly as a surgeon could have done. Then he washed off the blood again and swathed the arm in the linen bandages, sewing them tightly in their places, and the work was done.

"Thank you, Gilbert," said Gandelion, a brilliant smile lighting up his handsome face. "Few men would do as much for an enemy, although an enemy who always fights fair. You know what I am, a soldier of Britain, ready to go where I am sent, and to do the orders of my superiors, but I am not so base as not to see honor even in the mask of a foe; guide."

"I was not always so," replied Gilbert.

"I know it; language, everything you say and do, tells me that you were born a gentleman. Hark to the clamor yonder! Your Maj Anthony is driving this ragamuffin army into the river, and he is serving them right."

"Where is your company?"

"Like Falstaff, I have led them where they are peppered, and I should have been as loth to march through Coventry with them as was that doughty officer with his command of jail-birds. Confound it, man, do you think I care anything about the scoundrels who followed me? Let them go where they like, and end as they like, for I am tired of it all. Do you know what has become of Morena? I have not seen her for some days."

"Neither have I, but the girl can take care of herself. You don't know the little maid as well as I do, or you would be certain that she is safe in this country, for her hand is always ready to defend herself against white men, and no Indian would do her wrong. There is only one way in which she could come to harm, and that is through her own loving heart. God judge the man that dares to wrong her, and man's vengeance light upon him! I'd follow him to the end of the earth to take his villainous life."

"Well said, old hero! well said; so would I!" cried the young Englishman, striking his unwounded hand into the open palm of Gilbert. "I don't know how to begin, but I may as well make you my confidant. I love that Indian

girl with as pure a devotion as human heart ever felt; I would peril my life to save her, and yet I know not what to do."

"Marry her; she would make you a good and true wife," said Gilbert.

"My family—" began Gandelion.

"That is it; your accursed pride of race and family name is the stumbling-block before you. Cast it all aside, and do justice to yourself and to her, or else leave her and never speak to her again. You owe her the one or the other."

"I could not do that," said the young man, earnestly. "You do not, cannot know how much I love her, or how deeply my happiness is bound up in her. But, let it pass; at least I shall do her no wrong, and if she cannot be my wife, I will be a friend to her through all time. The battle rolls to the south."

"Yes, what can these painted red-skins do against the trained forces of Wayne and Scott and Barbie? It was foolish in them to force a battle, and they have reaped their reward at last. My work is done here, and I must away, to find the girl we lost in the upper passes of the river, Helen Carlyon."

"I heard somethin' of it, and am interested in her fate. Morena is wrapped in admiration of her beauty and goodness, and is roaming up and down the river in search of her."

"I hope she may be successful," said the Guide, rising. "I have lost my companions, three as noble fellows as ever pulled trigger, each in his way the type of a true man."

"Who do you mean? Trust me, I shall make no use of anything you may tell me, to do you harm."

"The Irishman known as Handy Pat, Clinton Waterman, and Owasco the Onondaga. We were set upon while endeavoring to follow the trail of Helen, by a portion of the braves of Darromed, and in the struggle became separated, and what became of my companions I do not know."

"I am sorry to hear it. Clinton Waterman was the only Indian agent I ever knew who had the good of the Indians at heart, and did his best for them. McKay, now, in his cursed blindness and stupidity, has drawn the Indians into a war which will drive them back from the Miami country and leave it in the hands of the Americans. I have labored against it for three years, and now all my plans are baffled by this ignorant Scotchman, who thinks of nothing but the wealth he can gain as an Indian agent."

"You are a little hard upon McKay, but he deserves it all. As for me—"

"Take the vengeance of Darromed!" cried a savage voice close at hand. A bowstring twanged, and an arrow flew, hissing through the air.

The Guide instinctively dropped upon his knee and threw up his arms, and as he did so, an arrow passed completely through the forefinger of his right hand, while a demoniac laugh echoed through the forest. Gandelion drew a pistol with his unwounded hand and darted into the thicket, but the Indian was gone.

When Gandelion came back, the Guide was looking intently at the arrow, with a troubled face. It was not the ordinary war-arrow, but a small, light shaft, with a thin steel head. The Guide drew it from the wound and held up his finger to the light, and he could see a bluish-red circle passing out from the wound.

"Give me your hatchet," he cried. "Do not hesitate, for quick work must be done, or I am gone. The arrow was steeped in the venom of the rattle-snake. "The hatchet!"

"What do you mean to do?"

"The hatchet, I say!" hissed the Guide. "Do you think I can die now, with my mission unperformed?"

Gandelion gave him the hatchet without any further words, and closing all his fingers except the wounded one, the Guide laid it against the trunk of a great tree and drew back the hatchet.

"Thud!"

The finger flew into the air some feet, from the force of the blow, and the Guide turned with unshaken courage to the other.

"What have you got in that flask?"

"Brandy," replied Gandelion.

"Give it to me," replied the other, quietly. "Some of the venom may have got into my veins, and there is nothing like liquor to counteract its influence."

The flask was a large one, holding nearly a pint, and the Guide began to drink, stopping only to take breath, until he had finished the flask, while Gandelion managed to bind up the wounded hand.

A queer expression began to spread over the face of the Guide, and he leaned against a tree for support, giving utterance to short hurrahs from time to time.

"Wha's a matter a me, Gandy, eh? Things seem to go round like a top," he hiccupped.

"You are drunk," replied the Englishman. "Nobody could drink nearly a pint of that brandy and not get salubrious."

"Hi, yip, I ain't drunk, am I? Never was drunk in my life, hi, yip—hi!"

"Oh, keep still; you will have the Indians down on you next."

"Me? Get out! Am I afraid of Indians, eh? Not if I know it; hi—yip! hi! That a bes' brandy ever see in all my life. Takes right hold, that does, hip!"

"Yes, I should say that it *did* take hold. You are as drunk as a king, though what you wanted to get drunk for, I don't know. Hold up, can't you? I won't hold you if you want to lie down."

"See that finger fly, didn't you? It popped up like a jumping jack. I s'pose you think you know all about me, don't you? I'm a guide and hunter, they say, but they don't know that I came of one of the best families in old Kentucky, hurrah for Kentucky!"

"Then you were not always a guide?" said Gandelion, hoping to get something out of him which would give a clew to his identity.

"Want to pump me 'cause I'm drunk, don't you? Hip! Can't come that on me, you know, if I am drunk. You shut up and let me sleep. The poison is killed now; that brandy was powerful."

Gandelion arranged a pillow of moss for his head, and laid him on it, and in a moment the Guide was asleep, in that peculiarly strong sleep which only drunken men know. As he lay there, Gandelion saw that a little chain of gold which was passed around his neck had slipped out, and a golden locket lay half open upon the ground. He took it up, indolently, and turned it over, looking at the contents. It held two pictures, face to face—one, a noble looking young man, in a rich green uniform, and a lovely woman. Gandelion started back, with a look of surprise, and looked again and again at the pictures, and for half an hour he sat there, motionless, looking at the locket with the same fixed, intent gaze.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE AMBUSH.

We must go back to the day when Darromed crossed the Miami, carrying Helen in his arms, and leaving his baffled pursuers upon the other bank unable to follow him. The defiant laugh of the savage rung in their ears like a knell, and they knew not what to do. The Guide was the first to recover himself, and calling to his companions to follow him, he ran along the bank to a place where the force of the stream began to slacken, and here, after several attempts they succeeded in crossing, pushing their rifles before them on logs. Once on the other shore, they ran up the stream to the place where they had last seen Helen, and found the trail. Waterman was for following at once, and was seconded by the impulsive Irishman, when arose the passionless voice of common sense and reason.

"What do you propose to do, Clinton Waterman? Can we beat forty or fifty well-armed savages on their own ground?"

"I must save Helen; you promised to follow and save her," was the only reply the lover could give.

"Yes; but I have other objects for which I live, and dearer to me even than this. We can only throw our lives away by following these men now, for they will lay a trap for us."

"I did not know that you were a *coward* before," was Waterman's contemptuous retort.

Gilbert started back and laid his hand upon a weapon, and for a moment the expression of his face was terrible.

"You must take back that word, young man," he said. "I take it from no living soul, be he whom he may."

"I am not one to retract my words so readily," returned Waterman, sternly. "If you do not follow the trail of these hell-hounds you at least lay yourself open to the imputation of cowardice, for I swear to go alone if no one will follow me in this duty."

Owasco stepped between them, for he saw that the Guide was in a fearful passion. "My young brother is very wrong to question the bravery of one who has fought well and nobly upon many fields," he said. "Let him reflect but a moment and he will see how great a wrong his words do to a noble man."

"I retract!" cried Waterman, impulsively. "I have proved your valor, and am aware that you do not know what fear means, but think of my beloved Helen, and consent to do something for her liberation. Forgive the impulsive folly of a man guided only by his love."

"That is enough," replied Gilbert. "I can remember when I was as fiery as you; but time and trouble have left their scars upon me, and I have learned in the rough school of affliction that nothing is to be gained by foolhardiness. We will follow the Indians as a matter of course, but cautiously, for their force is too great for us to cope with."

"Thank you, Gilbert. I felt that you would pity and forgive me. I wish I could as readily forgive myself."

Owasco took the lead in following the trail. It led them by a devious path through the woods for some miles, made the circuit of the British post below the rapids, for Darromed knew that the British officers would not leave his prisoner in his grasp if he showed her at

the fort, and struck the river two miles below. Here some of the party had evidently taken to their canoes, while another, and by far the greater portion, had struck out across the forest in the direction of the Indian villages on the Sandusky.

"That settles it," said Gilbert; "they are off for the Miami villages, or else for Wyandot—I am inclined to think the latter. They put confidence in their ability to beat back Wayne, as they have before done St. Clair and Harmar; but they will find themselves mistaken, for Anthony Wayne is not the man to be caught napping."

"Let us follow them even to their villages, and by force or craft rescue Helen Carlyon from their hands."

"Helen has gone in the canoe. Take the trouble to look at these tracks leading away from the river, and you will see that there is no women among them. I have lived in the Indian country long enough, and studied their wiles with sufficient care to know this."

"What course will they take?" asked Waterman, in despair.

"They will descend the river to its mouth, as I said before, and make for some of the settlements upon the lake below, probably Sandusky. My idea is to go back to the rapids and get canoes, as it is easier to follow in that way than on foot; besides, we can search the bays and inlets better, for who can tell whether Darromed has not some hiding-place down the river in which he will leave Helen?"

At this moment a man dressed in the garb of a settler burst from the bushes and ran toward them. They could see that his face was stained with blood and his garments torn and dirty, as if he had just been engaged in a terrible struggle.

"Help me, if you are Christians," he cried, in a voice of agony. "A white girl is being carried through yonder thicket by half a dozen Wyandots, and we can save her."

"Come on," cried Waterman, drawing his pistols. "It is Helen whom he has seen. Lead the way, sir, and we will give a good account of these Indians."

"Wait, Clinton, for God's sake!" cried Gilbert. But the young man darted away, closely followed by Handy Pat in the lead of the newcomer. Though full of sore misgivings, the Guide and Owasco entered the thicket nearly together. At once, in front, flank and rear, rose a horde of yelling savages. Half a dozen threw themselves upon the leading man and dragged him out of sight, he uttering loud cries for mercy. Twenty or thirty painted red-skins surrounded the unfortunate party, and a circle of steel-knives and hatchets hemmed them in. They fought with the energy of despair, and several of the yelling fiends went down; but their stubborn valor was vain against the tremendous force of the enemy. When the conflict was over, Waterman found himself and Pat, both wounded slightly in several places, prisoners in the hands of the savages. Neither Owasco nor the Guide were to be seen, though in the *melee* he had not been able to discover whether they had escaped or were slain. The Indians were most of them known to the agent, who had passed the greater portion of the last four years among the tribes of the "North-western Territory," as the land north of the Ohio was called by the Americans. But he looked in vain for an expression of sympathy or kindness in their painted faces. Several of them had been wounded and two killed in the desperate encounter.

"Ha!" screamed one of the Indians, shaking a bloody hand in the face of the agent. "You talk no more in the lodges of the Wyandots. You are no better than a dead dog from this hour, for the Wyandots will drink your blood."

"Arrah, get away wid ye, ye thafe av the worruld," yelled Handy Pat. "Come out, any two av ye, and I'll fight ye wid me bare fists an' bate ye at that."

"Keep still, Pat," ordered Waterman. "Nothing is to be gained by bluster, that I can see. We are in great trouble, and can only trust in an overruling Providence."

"I'd thrust to me heels, av they'd let me go loose but half a minnit," replied Pat. "See ye now, ye big red naygur, will ye fight me now wid bare fists for a dollar? A dollar to a cint I bate ye."

One of the savages struck him in the mouth with his open hand, and, bound as he was, he could only gnash his teeth without returning the blow. The dead were buried upon the spot, and litters were made for the wounded; then, forcing the prisoners forward among them, they struck across country for the river. After a laborious march, during which the two men were exposed to every indignity, they struck the river again, where they found Darromed and his party waiting to receive them. The chief came forward full of joy as he saw whom they had as prisoners.

"Hugh! these will make amends for the insults offered a chief of the great nation. I will give him a death such as no warrior ever gained, and, if he escapes he deserves to live."

Bring the wild horse which Dawalla brought from the land where the sun sets."

They brought out a fiery steed, such as Mazepa rode in his wild course through the Ukraine.

"A noble steed—

A Tartar of the Ukraine breed,
Who looked as though the speed of thought,
Were in his limbs; but he was wild,
Wild as the wild deer, and untaught."

They tied him, yet bleeding from his many wounds, upon the wild steed's back, sitting upright in the saddle, with his hands free. Three stalwart savages held the plunging horse and headed him for a great bluff which rose high above the water, a hundred feet in the air. Before they loosed him there was a cry of bitter agony, and Helen threw herself at the feet of the chief.

"Spare him, chief, do not murder him before my eyes," she gasped.

"It is well that you should come," said the chief, "for you shall see how a Wyandot avenges himself upon his enemies, who follow him to slay him."

"Beware!" hissed the young agent. "I may die, vile red-skin, but there are those who will avenge any insult you offer that beautiful girl."

Darromed seized Helen by the wrist and dragged her to her feet.

"Do not be a fool, white girl," he cried. "You have come to look upon the death of the agent of the Yankees, and you shall. I hate him, and have hated him for years, when I saw him coming among the tribes, making treaties to steal away their land for the Yankees. He is a dog whose blood will turn to water when he looks his death in the face and sees how terrible it is."

The woods had been cut away to the brow of the bluff, which rose like a tower above the water, by workmen who had been bringing supplies to the post at the rapids, leaving a narrow road. Into this road they led the plunging horse, laughing with demoniac glee as they thought of the terrible death before the young agent. His face wore a high and lofty look, for if he must die, at least he would not die with bound hands.

"Farewell, Helen!" he cried. "If I die here, never forget that I loved you and gave my life for your sake."

"Loose him!" shrieked Darromed.

The Indians sprung aside, and struck the wild steed upon the flanks. Even while in mid career, the agent found time to throw off the bonds upon his feet, so that he had freedom of action. Upon both sides and in the rear, up to the very brow of the bluff, he saw the Indians standing with poised rifles, ready to shoot him down if he dared take any other course except over the bluff. He set his teeth firmly, and grasping the reins, shouted to the wild horse. No need to urge him on, in that hour. Wild with the blows he had received, and his eyes set furiously, he plunged on toward the fatal brink.

In an hour like this, all the evil of a man's life flashes before his eyes like a vision. Waterman saw this picture, and with a fervent prayer for the safety of Helen, and that God would forgive whatever sin he had committed, he dashed on. He caught the gleam of bright water, and then the horse reared upon the perilous verge, shot out into the air, and plunged downward into space, while wild shouts of fiendish laughter rung in his ears, as he went whizzing downward. The water at the base of the bluff was fortunately deep, for horse and rider disappeared from view. But, when the savages gained the brink, they saw the horse swimming slowly toward the opposite bank, but the agent was nowhere to be seen. Had it ended him? Was that young life, which promised so gloriously for the future, buried in the bright waters of the Miami? Helen had hurried with the rest; she had seen the fatal plunge, and when the horse rose alone, she uttered a long, wailing cry of agony, and would have thrown herself from the bluff, had not a hand seized her and dragged her back.

"No, white girl," said Darromed, "you have seen the vengeance of a chief; beware that you do not bring that vengeance on your own head."

"Ha, look!" cried one of the braves; "white man git away."

Darromed gave utterance to a yell of rage, which echoed through the surrounding forest, while Handy Pat crowed loudly in delight. The horse was rising from the water near the other bank, but by his side rose the manly form of Clinton Waterman, who was mounted the next moment, and amid a shower of balls, none of which seemed to reach their mark, he rode over the bank and disappeared. That bluff has earned a name in history, and to this day the Buckeye men beside their fires tell the story of that wonderful leap, and still more wonderful escape.

The anger of the chief knew no bounds. Not only had he allowed his enemy to escape, but in his desire to inflict some unique and dreadful punishment upon him, he had actually fur-

nished the means. Helen dropped upon her knees and poured out her thanks to the Supreme Being for interposing his kind hand to save her lover's life. With an angry exclamation the chief dragged her away and clasped her arm so tightly that she uttered an exclamation of pain.

"Hold on, Darromed," said an angry voice. "That sort of thing won't do. I did not give you any license to hurt the girl."

The speaker came forward, and though his face was now cleaned, and his dress changed, Pat had no difficulty in recognizing the man who had decoyed them into the ambuscade.

"Arrah, ye dirthy divil!" howled Pat. "L'ave me loose, ye bla'g'ard; l'ave me loose, and I'll bate the hid av ye into a cullender. I'll l'ave ye so full av holes that your mither won't know ye."

"Thank you, my fine fellow," replied the other. "I do not propose to 'l'ave you loose.' By the burr under your tongue I should say that you ought to be a subject of Great Britain."

"Sure, av I was born undher the dirthy Government av Great Britain, ye thafe av the wurruld w'u'd that be any raison phy I'd stay unther it? Not wunce! I'm a Yankee now, body an' bones!"

"You don't seem to know me, friend Pat," said the man, "or your manner of speaking to me would be changed. Look at me a little closer and you will change your tune."

Pat looked at him as requested, and a ludicrous expression of alarm began to show itself upon his face.

"May the divil resave me, but it's Capt'in McKay!" he roared.

"Colonel, colonel, my man. His gracious majesty has seen fit to reward my years of faithful service by making me a colonel, and I recognize in you my body-servant, and a regularly enlisted man, and consequently a deserter from his majesty's 60th rifles. I am afraid you have got yourself into trouble, Monsieur Pat O'Driscoll."

"Och, sure ye've mistaken the man, honey," said Pat, in a wheedling tone. "I'm not Pat O'Driscoll at all, at all, yer honor, for he kem from county Antrim, and I was raised in the bogs among the Far-downs. I niver saw ye before in all my life."

"Bah!" replied McKay, who was a coarse, saturnine-looking personage, past the middle age. "Blarney is entirely thrown away upon me, and I never forget a face. I shall find it my duty to give you up to Major Campbell at Fort Miami, and have you shot as a deserter."

"Faith, I wouldn't do that, colonel dear," said Pat. "Whin I left ye, I fear I was too sanguine in me expectations, for I thought I w'u'd scratch gould off the bushes in Ameriky. I've got enough of it now, and w'u'd be pl'ased to go back till me ould place."

"You would run away the very first chance you got," McKay suggested.

"Divil a bit, colonel."

"Then I'll try what I can do for you, although you don't deserve it," said the Englishman, moving away. He had a sharp controversy with Darromed before he would consent to give up his prisoner, but it ended in his being released and installed again as servant of the British agent. Helen had released herself from Darromed and had seated herself at the foot of a tree, when she was aroused by the voice of McKay, who had come softly to the place where she sat, and was regarding her with a strange expression.

CHAPTER XX.

COLONEL M'KAY.

"I AM sorry to see you a prisoner here, Miss Carlyon," he said, softly. "How did you happen to fall into the hands of the Indians?"

"You must ask your friend, Darromed," replied Helen, sharply. "I do not affect to misunderstand you, Colonel McKay, and I demand that you at once take steps to have me set at liberty."

"Excuse me if I ask how I can do that, Miss Helen? To be sure, I have some little influence, but it is not great enough to take you out of the hands of the chief after the events of the past few days."

"To what events do you refer?"

"To the fighting upon the river, the attack upon the island, and the defeat of the Indians; the capture of Darromed, his imprisonment in the cave, and subsequent escape, and the release of the Guide, known as Gilbert, by Gandon."

"You seem to have a thorough knowledge of these events, sir."

McKay looked confused, and turned away his head to cover a look of anger.

"I will try what I can do for you with the chief," he said; "but I fear I shall plead in vain, as he seems bent upon keeping you."

"You have been hospitably received under my father's roof, sir," said Helen, "and you will make but a poor return if you will not do anything to save me from disgrace and shame."

"What would you do to free yourself from the hands of Darromed?"

"Anything—everything."

"Then would you reconsider the refusal you gave me at your father's house, a year ago?"

Helen instantly arose and looked at him with a fixed gaze, which caused him, in spite of his effrontery, to turn a variety of colors, and swear inwardly.

"You would take advantage of that, then?" she said, slowly. "A gentleman—at least one who deserved the name—would have thought twice before offering an insult of this kind to a woman in my situation. You ask me to marry you, as you asked me once before, and I refuse."

"Remember where you are," he said harshly. "You may need my help to get you out of the hands of Darromed, and I am likely to refuse it if you retain your present opinions. An insult? What do you mean, girl? It is no insult I offer you—I, a gentleman high in social rank and in the army, and you the daughter of a penniless subaltern in the Yankee service."

"You have said enough, sir, and my answer is given. I must beg you to leave me to myself, as I am not desirous of your company."

"I am afraid you do not know me," he said, slowly. "You may drive me too far, and force me to show you what my power really is. There are worse fates than to be the wife of even so poor a man as Colonel McKay."

"Yet I will dare them all, sir, in preference to such a fate. Leave me at once, and keep up your plots against the unhappy whites of the North-west. There is blood upon your soul, sir—the blood of the many unfortunate who have been slain in this cruel and useless war. Unborn thousands will know your history, only to execrate it bitterly; and McKay will be a bugbear to frighten children with in the after-times."

The colonel gritted his teeth hars' ly together, and he made a half motion to raise his hand, as if he would have struck her. It was well for him he did not, for Handy Pat was standing not far away, and the expression of his face was anything but pleasant. If McKay had looked at him he might have had good cause to doubt whether he had a very safe servant in the Irishman. But Pat controlled himself, and approached him with a benignant smile.

"That's right, master. Phat business have she to talk that way to a colonel in the service av the king? Sthrike her wid yer fist av she looks at ye that way ag'in."

This good advice had the effect the Irishman intended, for it drew the wrath of McKay to himself, and turning, he bestowed a buffet upon the unhappy Irishman, which "brought the claret" from his nose in a plentiful stream.

"Sorra resave the hand av ye!" growled Pat. "Phat did ye hit me fur?"

"To teach you to attend to your own affairs, you rascal. Interfere with me again and I will give you up to Darromed, and let him use you as he intended."

"No, thank ye. I don't care about it at all, av ye pl'ase, fur the Inglin don't look swate at me, seeing that I bate his hid at the island fight. Don't hit me ag'in, beca'se I don't like it."

Pat retreated, and McKay followed, full of wrath. He had made but little in his attempt upon Helen, and was satisfied that she despised him as much as ever. Two years before he had bowed his pride to make an offer of marriage to her, when he was forced by a wound he had received by accident to make an asylum of her father's house, and had been refused so promptly that he had not the courage to renew his offer. Whether he had set the Indians to attempt her capture and follow her so persistently, she was still in doubt; but she knew that he was a man of great determination, and rarely gave up anything upon which he had set his heart.

The Irishman was in a quandary. Satisfied that his former master needed him, for the present he felt himself safe, but he had no guarantee that he would not deliver him over to the tender mercies of the British officers when they reached the post. Under these circumstances, it was not surprising that he did not care about staying under his new master any longer than was absolutely essential to his own safety and well-being.

"Now see, master," he said, "will ye tell me where we are goin'?"

"Silence your stupid tongue!" commanded McKay. "It is enough for you to know that you are to obey me, and the first token of insubordination will be the signal for me to throw you into the hands of the Indians or of the troop from which you deserted."

"Sure ye wouldn't do that same, master dear!" howled Pat. "I got tired av staying in wan place so long, an' I thought I'd thry this side av the line a bit. A poor gossoon like me ain't answerable for what he does."

"I want you to understand my orders, then. You are to watch that young lady night and day, and see that she does not escape. If you should be unfortunate enough to permit her to do that, you may as well drown yourself, for I shall have no mercy upon you."

"Deed an' I don't think you would, master dear," groaned Pat. "I'll watch her; sorra time will I take me eye off her till she's safe wherever ye want to take her."

"Very good; see that you keep to that idea and I will make it worth your while. I am a very good fellow as long as you do not make me trouble, and when you do, I am one of the worst men in the world. I have set my heart upon a certain object, and I intend to accomplish it."

McKay strode away, leaving poor Pat standing like a statue, staring after him, evidently greatly troubled because he could not hit him.

"Oh, yis; a nice man ye ar', av I do say it phat shouldn't. I'd like to be at a tay-party wid two or t'ree jist such bla'gards as you be, alahan! Who, it hurts me til the sowl av me that I don't dare to t'row a stone at ye an' cave in yer hid. I'm to watch Miss Helen, am I? Deed an' I'll be the finest watcher ye ever h'ard til av."

Pat scratched his head and considered.

"Now Masther Clinton is off, I dunno phat I'll do. Who! How it scared me whin he wint over the hill on the black horse! It's him that can do it, anyhow. An' thin there's Gilbert; phare the divil is he, anyway? An' the rid haythen, Owasco; a fine lad. I'll be the de'th av that bla'g'ard av a Darrymid wan av these days, sure!"

McKay had been in close consultation with Darromed, and now came forward again and spoke to Helen.

"I have interested myself in your behalf," he said, "in spite of your cruelty to me. But, as I told you, it will be useless for me to try to get you out of his hands, except in one way."

"You need not trouble yourself to tell me what that way is, sir," she said. "I think I can fathom your shallow plan."

"Still I must state it. If you will say that you are my wife, I can claim you from him, and he will give you up."

"Your wife; yours!"

The expression of utter detestation in her tone was so bitter that all the blood in McKay's veins seemed to turn at once to gall, and he seized her fiercely by the wrist.

"Mad girl, do you know what it is to drive me to despair? I warn you, as you value all you hold dear, to think before you dare insult me again. I have told you that I love you as a man addressing a woman, as humbly as I can. You have only replied by insults, and I will not endure it. Now, then, listen to me. You have looked your last upon your home, you have seen your father for the last time, unless you consent to go back as my wife."

"You are not in earnest?"

"You will find it so."

"Then," said Helen, turning her eyes with a piteous gesture in the direction of her home, "dear father, farewell! Now, sir, I am in your hands, but remember that I come of as good blood as you, and our race prefer death to disonor."

"What would you do?"

"Kill you if you dared to lay a hand upon me. Look"—she produced a small but keen dagger. "My lover gave me this, the man I am to marry, and in whose love I glory. Do you know who he is? The man whom to-day your red miscreants thought to hound to his death, but whom God in His great mercy and providence preserved so wonderfully. He escaped, and while he treads the earth you are not safe."

"Give up that dagger," hissed McKay.

"Not I! Come and take it, if you dare."

He advanced, and she struck at him with such deadly earnestness that it was only by an agile spring backward that he saved himself from a severe wound. As it was, the point touched his breast, inflicting a slight cut.

"Vixen!" he screamed, livid with passion; "I believe you would take my life if you could."

"If a rattlesnake coiled itself to strike its fangs into your flesh, you would slay it, would you not?"

"Ugh!" said Darromed, who was looking on. "The white girl has a brave heart, and I love to see her raise her arm to defend herself."

"I did not ask your opinion, sir," replied McKay, in an angry tone. "When I do, it will be time for you to interfere."

The chief answered only by a haughty stare, while Handy Pat lifted one leg from the ground and indulged in a pantomime which might have brought condign punishment upon him had his master seen him.

"This haughty temper of yours shall be brought very low," said the colonel, again addressing Helen. "In the mean time, get into yonder canoe and I will follow."

"Where am I to be taken?" she demanded.

"You will know when you reach it. I am not in the humor to answer the questions of one who does nothing except insult me. But beware; you shall surely be my wife, or a worse thing may happen to you."

With a look of lofty scorn Helen took her place in the canoe, and one after another four Indians followed with paddles, while McKay and Pat made up the number; and under the strokes of the paddles they shot rapidly down the stream. McKay took out a little Union Jack and elevated it upon a ramrod in the stern of the canoe, so that the savages, by whom the

banks were lined, could not mistake them for enemies.

Scarcely had they disappeared beyond a bend in the river when Morena appeared, and Darromed was delighted that she had not come in time to see Helen and Pat.

"The woods are full of braves," she said. "Do the Indians mean to strike at Big Whirlwind?"

"Big Whirlwind will meet the fate of other white chiefs who have come into the country of the Shawnee and the Wyandot," replied Darromed. "Before a sun has gone over your head he shall sleep in a bloody grave."

"So will many braves of the nations," she declared. "I pray you do not stir up the warriors to battle, for they cannot beat the Big Whirlwind as they have beaten St. Clair and Harmar."

"You will not believe that the nations are strong. They are not alone, for their brothers, the British, will give them aid."

"Why should you change masters?" she asked. "What the Americans want the red-coats will also demand. McKay is a snake in the grass, and his heart is full of evil. If you had heard the words he has spoken in the ears of Morena you would no longer trust him."

"Ha! did he insult Morena, Queen of the Lake?" he cried.

"He did."

"It is well that I was not by with a hatchet in my hand," hissed the chief. "He would do well to be careful, for the blood of a chief is warm, and may grow warmer."

"Are the chiefs determined upon battle?" she persisted, still eager to find out what they intended to do."

"Yes; the nations cry out for war. But first we must put the fox asleep, and so we speak kind words in the ears of the white men, and when they are lulled to rest, the nations will come down like a flood."

Morena, by a series of skillful questions, made out that the attack would not be many hours deferred. Then, as she turned to go away, she remembered something.

"Chief," she said, coming quickly back, "you know what I wear about my neck. It opens like a watch, and inside are two pictures, a man and a woman. Ever since I can remember I have worn this. Will you tell me from whence it came?"

"Wagh!" cried the chief, angrily. "When had Morena so long a tongue? It is yours, and that is enough for you to know."

"Why should I not know?"

"Be silent, Morena, or you will arouse the great wrath of Darromed, whose heart has been kindled against you for many days. Say no more about the pictures, or I will tear the bangle from your neck and cast it into the water. Does it seem well for a daughter of the Wyandots to love the pictures of those of the accursed race?"

"Some of the blood flows in these veins, how much I do not know," replied Morena. "And when you say you will take this picture from me, you know that you dare not; for your life you dare not!"

She stood like an enraged pythoness glaring at him, one hand firmly clasping the barrel of her carbine, and the other stretched out in a haughty gesture. Cowed by her manner, Darromed was silent, and shortly after she left the camp to carry Wayne the intelligence which put him upon his guard against the Indians. After she left the camp she met an Indian who was in her service, and who told her exactly when the fight would begin, and under her direction he lighted the fire upon the hill-top which commanded a view of the battle-field. During the sanguinary conflict she stood upon the hill, looking down upon the strife, her fine face expressing her sorrow.

"Why would not my people listen, why would they not remember that my knowledge was greater than theirs? See, they fly before the disciplined men of Wayne, and there will be wailing to-night in the villages of the tribes," she said, unconsciously.

"Then the tribes should hear reason when it is spoken," said a quiet voice at her side. She turned and saw that Owasco had come up the hill, and with her was looking at the battle.

CHAPTER XXI.

A GENEROUS DEED—MORENA AT MIAMI.

"HAVE you found her?" cried the chief, eagerly, "or is she still in the hands of Darromed?"

"Darromed did not have her a few hours ago unless she was hidden somewhere, for I was in his camp. But let me give you a guide, so that you may know which way to go. Darromed is a snake in the grass, but he has another friend, even worse than he. Have you heard the name of McKay on the river?"

"Hugh!" was the guttural exclamation. "See you how the blood of the red-man is flowing yonder? McKay is the cause, and I will not forget it. He it was who stirred up the Indian to fight against his white brothers, and now the power of the tribes must be broken."

"I have no fear that the white man will be

beaten, and it is better so. The tribes must know their master. See, see!"

The Indians were broken and flying in wild disorder through the woods. They heard the charging cheer of the legion, and caught glimpses of their blue uniforms and bright bayonets dashing through the cover. A cloud of fugitives ran along the river bank in wild dismay, while some cast themselves into the stream, preferring rather to meet that fate than to feel the steel of their pursuers.

"We must away," cried the Onondaga. "My life would not be worth one of the shining coins of the white man if I stayed."

"Go, then!" replied Morena. "I have no fear of the coming Indians, for they know that I am a true friend."

Owasco turned and ran rapidly up the stream to a point half a mile above the scene of the battle, and sitting down in a place where a screen of bushes hid him from the view of those upon the other bank, he waited anxiously.

When he escaped with Gilbert from the toils of the savages, into which they had been led by the treachery of McKay, he had been compelled to make a *detour* in order to get away from them, and when he considered himself safe, none of his party could be seen, nor had they answered his signals, and he was forced to believe either that they had perished or were prisoners in the hands of the enemy. He had turned back because he found the country full of Indians, advancing to the rendezvous of the Rapids, and he knew that the great struggle was about to commence, but had not come in time to join it.

Sitting concealed under the bushes, he was aware that a man in ragged and bloody attire was crawling down the opposite bank. In spite of the mask of blood and filth in which he was enveloped, Owasco knew his enemy, Darromed. After launching the poisoned arrow at Gilbert, he had made a circuit, and passing through the rear of the Americans, gained the bank of the river. There was something horrible beyond description in the savage chief in his blood-stained garb, and he was evidently half-maddened by his misfortunes. He did not pause long upon the bank, but plunged boldly in, and when he appeared upon the surface, swam vigorously toward the very spot where Owasco lay concealed. The Onondaga loosened his hatchet and knife, and prepared for a desperate encounter, for he knew that Darromed would be no easy prey.

The Wyandot reached the bank at last, and drew himself up slowly, evidently in great pain. Owasco then for the first time saw how badly wounded he was, and the generous heart which beat in his red bosom would not suffer him to assail a wounded man. But he lay quiet, while the chief slowly ascended the bank, when he sprung up suddenly and appeared before him, with his hand upon his hatchet.

Darromed uttered a low, guttural cry, and looked at the Onondaga with a glance of fire, as he slowly drew his knife from his belt.

"Renegade dog!" he hissed. "You have stood upon the hights to laugh at the destruction of the greatest plot the Indians ever framed; you, whose skin is red but whose heart is black; you, who should have stood by my side, fighting against the enemies of your race. Come to me, and I will give the crows your body to pick at. Your scalp shall not hang in my lodge, with the scalps of those who have fallen in battle bravely; I will tie a stone to it and sink it in the depths of a black river, for it is not worthy to hang beside brave men's."

"Your blood has flowed fast and you have lost your mind, or you would remember that I have fought with you before," answered Owasco, quietly. "No, I am not a fool, neither am I a coward. When you are strong enough to fight, I will meet you and teach you what it is to meet the wrath of an Onondaga chief. Where is Helen, the girl whose face is fairer than the Night Spirit, whom you stole away?"

"Do I not say that you are a coward? Who ever dared to face Darromed in his anger? Where the white girl is I know, but you must dig deep into my heart to find the secret out. She is far away, and nevermore shall the white man gaze upon her, never hear her voice, sweet as the music of running water."

"You must tell me!" replied Owasco, firmly. "The secret is here," replied Darromed, beating upon his breast. "Come and find it."

Owasco began to grow angry. He knew that at any time he was a match for Darromed, but now, when the Wyandot actually trembled from exhaustion, he had the game in his own hands. But, it did not accord with his ideas of honor, and he restrained himself by an effort.

"You talk like a child," said he; "as if I could not see that your blood is flowing. Ha! put down your hand. If you touch the bow I will kill you like a dog."

Darromed had upon his back a small steel bow, and at his side four or five arrows, thrust into a thick leathern sheath, with the points downward. Once or twice he had attempted to take down this bow, but as often was re-

strained by the menacing attitude of Owasco. The Onondaga knowing the nature of the chief, understood at once that the arrows were poisoned, and that the slightest touch was death if in any part of the body, mutilation if in a limb.

He saw that nothing but quick action could save him, and darting in, he threw his right arm about the body of the chief, pinioning his left arm to his side. As they went down together, he snatched the little quiver from the side of Darromed and flung it into the stream. The victory was even more rapid than he had hoped, for Darromed had not been aware how very weak he had become from loss of blood, and he was but a plaything in the hands of his foe. Before he had time to think, his only remaining weapon, his knife, was wrested from his grasp, and he was a prisoner in the hands of Owasco.

"Why don't you strike?" he screamed. "Why are you a fool, when you should be wise? I am the man who hates you, the man who to-day took the life of Gilbert, the Guide."

"Take care!" hissed Owasco, gritting his teeth. "If I thought that true I would bury my knife to the hilt in your heart."

"It is true. The poison of the rattlesnake is in his veins. Ah, ha!"

"I begin to see blood before my eyes," muttered Owasco. "Dog, if you speak true, the death I will give you will be terrible. Say once more that you have slain him."

But Darromed was silent. The last flash from the eyes of Owasco had cowed him, and he dared not speak.

"Answer!" cried Owasco. "Have you lied?"

"Yes," replied Darromed.

Owasco took out the buckskin thongs from the leggins of his prisoner, and tied him securely. One of the poisoned arrows had dropped out upon the earth, and he picked it up, looking at it curiously. Then, with anything but an agreeable expression upon his face, he sat down by the chief.

"I want to know where the white girl is, and no man can tell so well as Darromed. Will you not speak?"

"Owasco is a fool," was the reply.

"Yes; Owasco is such a fool that he wishes to see how poison works upon the flesh of a Wyandot. It is a strange thing that a little stain upon a steel point is enough to take the life of a man. See! I am going to prick you in the face."

"No, no!" screamed Darromed, for the first time showing fear; "do not touch me."

"You are caught in the net you set for others. Tell me where Helen is, or I will touch you."

"She is with McKay, the red-coat agent," Darromed confessed. "I speak true words, and now take away the arrow."

Owasco did nothing of the kind, but kept moving the horrible weapon backward and forward over the nose of the terrified chief, who actually turned livid with affright.

"What must I tell you now?" he cried.

"Take it away or you will touch me."

"It is good!" persisted Owasco. "I have found one thing that Darromed fears. Where has McKay gone with Helen?"

"Down the river, and then to Detroit," replied Darromed.

"Good! Does he want her for his wife?" demanded the Onondaga.

"Yes. Take away the arrow."

"I will lay it down; and when I think you are lying to me, you are a dead man. Where is Waterman, the agent?"

"He escaped. He rode a wild horse over the Council Bluff, and got clear."

"Where is Pat, the Irishman?"

"He is with McKay, to wait upon him, because he ran away from him long ago."

"And where is Gilbert, the Guide, the friend who has been true to me so many years?"

"I do not know," answered the chief, sullenly; "he is a dog, and I hate him."

Owasco took up the arrow and approached it to the cheek of the bound man. But the chief did not flinch. He knew that if he acknowledged the death of Gilbert it would be his own passport into eternity.

"Are you telling me true words?" demanded the Onondaga, sullenly. "If you lie, you die upon the spot."

Darromed said nothing; and with a guttural laugh the Onondaga cast the arrow into the stream, cut the bonds upon the limbs of his prisoner, and assisted him to arise.

"Go!" he said. "An Onondaga cannot strike an unarmed man, and one who is wounded. We shall meet again."

Now that the prospect of a horrible death by poison had passed away, the chief was himself again.

"Kill me," he said, offering his breast. "I do not fear death by the knife or the hatchet, and I will not take life from your hands."

"You must." Owasco spoke scornfully.

"I warn you that I will never rest until you are dead if you let me go."

"I care not. I will not strike you. Go in peace, and wait for the time when you will be strong enough to meet Owasco in battle."

For a moment Darromed stood before his enemy, his fierce eyes glaring living fires; and then he turned upon his heel and struck off into the pathless forest with slow, hesitating steps. Owasco looked after him a moment, and then struck his trail, which he followed with patient vigilance through the woods.

Morena remained upon the headland watching the fugitive Indians. Some of them recognized her in passing, and their faces showed that they remembered her counsels for peace, and they felt that they would have done well to listen to the Queen of the Lake, now that it was too late. She saw among them men who had been kind to her, as kind as was possible in men of their stoical natures, and she felt grieved for them, but knew that the lesson was a salutary one, and that they would not forget it.

She was thinking of Gandelion and the words he had spoken when they last met. She believed that he loved her; but, understanding the difficulties under which he labored, with sublime self devotion she had determined to cast him off if he came to her and spoke of love again. She would not drag him down, but leave him to work out his future as he might, unshackled by her love. For she did love him; all the strength of her pure young heart was in the passion, and she felt that for such a man it would be glorious to die.

"Who am I?" she murmured. "My heart tells me that I am not all an Indian, and that I was born for a better life than this. No matter; whatever may come to me in the after years, I am glad to think I have done some good to my kind. This beautiful girl, Helen, will not leave me. She is in McKay's power, and I must and will take her from him. I know that he set them to seize her, but where has he taken her?"

She sat for some time in silence, with her head bowed upon her knees, lost in thought. Then she arose, and saw that the shades of evening were gathering about her; and not caring to spend the night alone in the woods, advanced at a rapid pace, and soon saw the walls of Fort Miami rising against the evening sky. A party of Indians, scattered about the beach, gave way at her approach, and she passed through, greeting them kindly. A canoe lay upon the beach, and entering it, she paddled boldly toward the other shore, and landed just below the work. A sentry challenged her, and she gave her name, not having the word.

"There is the corporal," said the soldier. "I don't know whether he will pass you in or not."

"Colonel McKay would pass me if he heard I was waiting," she declared. "Let him know that Morena wishes to enter."

"The colonel is not here," replied the man, respectfully. "Corporal!"

A soldier holding that grade in the service came up, and seeing who it was, passed her at once.

"I suppose you do not know that Madame Lagrange is in the fort," he said. She came up from York* with the last regiment to Detroit, and came from Detroit yesterday. I've got orders to admit you at once, for she longs to see you."

Morena uttered a little cry of delight. Madame Lagrange was the lady who had taken so much pains to teach her, and who had earnestly entreated her to give up the tribe and become her daughter. But Morena regarded it as her duty to be faithful to the tribe, and had refused.

The garrison was all under arms as they passed in, for Wayne still continued hostile demonstrations outside, and they did not know but the fiery leader might take it upon himself to assail them.

The open space within the fort was full of armed men, and among others she saw the broken force of Canadian militia which had guided the Indians against Wayne.

Several small houses had been built under the walls for the accommodation of the officers. The corporal entered one of these, and knocked at an inner door. A lady who was within sprang up as they entered, and with a cry of joy caught Morena to her arms and pressed her to her heart.

"I am glad to meet you again, my darling," she said. "How could you stay away from me so long?"

CHAPTER XXII.

MORENA'S PROMISE—A TERRIBLE DILEMMA.

MADAME LAGRANGE was a woman in the prime of life, and of that rare personal beauty which elings to some women, even though advanced in age. Yet a look at her face would have convinced any one that hers had been a life of sorrow, for God leaves his mark upon all faces. Her dark eyes had in them a look of haunting grief, and her pale face was inexpressibly sad and tender. Morena had a loving heart, and the manner of her reception was touching in the extreme.

"You love me, then?" she asked, in a voice of

* Toronto.

touching pathos. "The poor Indian girl is not all forgotten?"

"Forgotten, my child! Oh, that you would be my child indeed! I would be so tender of you and so loving that you would forget this wild life, and love the one I would give you. In my desolation, your face has haunted me, and has been the sweetest recollection of a sorrowful past."

"You are too kind to me," said Morena, "and perhaps I may one day accept your kindness, and come to you, never to leave you more. As events are shaping themselves, I can see that I must soon be forced to break my connection with the tribe, and find with you a shelter and a home. When that time comes, you will receive me and shelter me in your arms?"

"I came here for that, Morena. Gandelion has written to me, and begged me to come and take you away from this life. You have no idea how much he cares for you, or how it grieves him to see you as you are."

A vivid flush stole up into the brown cheek of the forest maiden, and it seemed to her that her kind benefactress must hear the beating of her heart. Then Gandelion had been so tender in his love for her that he had sent for this good lady to take her into her heart and home!

"Gandelion is very kind, and I thank him, if only for the sight of your face once more. But the time is not yet. There is work for me to do, and I cannot pause until it is accomplished. A woman, beautiful and good, whom I love, is a prisoner in the hands of Indians led by McKay, and when I have saved her, I will bid good-bye to the tribe, and come to you."

"You promise this?"

"Yes; and you know I never break a promise."

"I can trust you, my darling," she said. "But I do not like to let you go out again into the forest, into the danger which is before you. My life has been very sad, and your love has made it brighter. Some day I will tell you my story, and why I am alone in the world. Once I had children who loved me, whose innocent prattle made my heart glad, but the sods of the valley have lain upon them, and fresh flowers have blossomed over them, for many a weary year."

"And your husband?"

"He, too, is dead. 'After life's fitful fever, he sleeps well.' Alas, my husband, that I cannot even find your grave, and tell you that, in all my sorrows, the remembrance of our short but happy life together has been very dear to me!"

Morena stole closer to the side of Madame Lagrange, and laid her cheek against that of the sorrowful woman.

"Do not grieve," she said, softly. "I love you."

"I know you do, my sweet one. You must stay with me to-night, and I will hold you to my heart, and think you one of those dear children I lost so long ago. Who is there? Come in."

An orderly appeared at the door, touching his cap.

"Major Gandelion is here, and wishes to call upon you."

Morena started up quickly. "Hide me somewhere, mother," she said, using that tender name as though she had the right. "I cannot see him now."

"Wait without, sir," said Madame Lagrange. "I will send Major Gandelion his answer soon."

The man saluted again and went out, and Madame Lagrange drew the trembling girl closer to her side. "What is it?" she said.

"I cannot meet him," sobbed Morena.

"And why? Do you know that he loves you?"

"Yes, mother. At least he says so."

"Call me by that tender name always, my sweet child, for you are to be my daughter indeed. Are you afraid to meet Herbert? Do you not like him?"

"Why should I keep my heart hidden from you? I love him as only a daughter of the forest can love, but he has a great future before him, and do you think I would drag him down to my level?"

"Such love as yours ennobles any man," replied Madame Lagrange. "Herbert surely has not dared to speak to you except as a gentleman should speak to a lady?"

"Oh, no, no!" cried Morena.

"Then why will you not meet him?"

"I have told you. Because I love him so that, if I hear his voice, I shall find it very hard to do my duty and cast him off. Let me go away, and do not tell him that I am here, or, if he knows, do not let him meet me."

Madame Lagrange arose, and led the way through a little hall into another room, which was fitted up for a lady. "Stay here," she said, "and I will meet Gandelion alone."

She kissed the lips of the blushing girl and walked quickly into the other room, and sent the orderly to admit her visitor, who came in with a flushed face, and excited air, and greeted her warmly, as they were related, and much of his advancement in the service was due to her influence.

"I am glad to see you, Herbert," she said offering her cheek to him to kiss. "Where have you been?"

"On the war-path," he replied, gayly, "and my ragamuffins have been as beautifully whipped as you could wish to see them. Upon my word, it was a sight to see Wayne's legion walk through them!"

"I told you how it would be," said Madame Lagrange, warmly. "You have no business upon this side of the line in the least, according to the treaty."

"Policy, my dear madame; policy. I obeyed orders simply, and the Government let my worthy friend McKay—whose nose I intend to pull as soon as I meet him—do all the planning. You know well enough how averse I was to the plan."

"And the result has been famous. Wayne chased the Indians up to the very walls of the fort, and I thought at one time he was going to make a mistake and take the fort itself."

"We will be forced to give it up in the end," added the major, quietly. "The truth is, we have no leader here who has the prestige of Anthony Wayne, the hero of Stony Point. Let that pass; we have made a blunder and must take the consequences, be they what they may. Did you get my letter?"

"Certainly; I came here upon the strength of it, and am ready to do what you ask."

"I was afraid you would laugh at me, dear cousin," said Gandelion, taking her hand. "I ought to have known you better, but I supposed that your pride of race, which seems to be a part of our family nature, would revolt against the idea of honorably loving a girl like Morena."

"Did you ever meet her equal in beauty and grace, sir? Is she not pure, brave of heart, and at the same time tender as a little child? You ought not to have wronged me by thinking I would object."

"Then listen to my plan. Morena is young, and a year or two in your society will teach her all those little points of breeding in which she is lacking, and then no living man dare point the finger at her. Even as it is, I would be pleased to meet a man bold enough to do it. It is a strange thing," he added, slowly, "how my love has strengthened for that sweet girl. I have watched her in her daily path—pure, beautiful, and good—and I felt that here was a nature thrown away upon ignorant savages. Yet she has done much to Christianize them, and they love her, and it will be a good day in the tribe when they know she is to leave them."

"You know her position among the tribes, then?"

"Yes; she was as a *queen* among them. They built her a cabin upon an island upon Miami Bay, and that spot was sacred to her. Not an Indian dare set his foot upon it without her permission. Four of the most beautiful women of the Wyandot nation lived with her there, and aided her in her work as queen and prophetess. It was from her living upon this island, and going to and fro in a canoe, that she gained her title of Queen of the Lake. It was there I first saw her, when I was sent to the tribe upon an embassy, and she took her place in the council, an honor seldom granted to a woman in the Wyandot nation. I was certain then that she was not an Indian, and subsequent knowledge of her taught me that this was true. Whatever her parentage, she has been among the tribes since she was a little child, and they look up to her as to a higher power. She is here, is she not?"

"Who told you so?"

"No matter. I must see her, and hope to convince her that it is not right for her to go out into the woods again."

"I am afraid that will be useless. She says that a woman has been taken by the Indians, and that she will not rest until she has saved her. Who is this prisoner?"

"A young lady called Helen Carlyon, the daughter of an American officer in the army of Wayne, who owns a large estate and stockade upon one of the rivers about one hundred miles east of the Miami. She was coming to the army for safety when she was captured by a chief called Darromed, and is now a prisoner somewhere."

"Have you seen her?"

"No; but a scout with whom I have come in contact a great deal lately, says that there is a wonderful resemblance between her and Morena; and his opinion is strengthened by that of others, who are now upon her track, determined to save her or perish."

"Morena has seen her?"

"No; there has been a strange fatality in that; and these two, who resemble each other so closely, have never met."

"It is a strange thing. What did Morena say about McKay? She seemed to intimate that he had some hand in the abduction of this young lady."

"I believe it, too. The fellow proposed for her upon one or two occasions, and was refused. He is a man to remember a slight of that kind, and the consequence is, he has laid this plot to insinuate her."

"The cowardly villain! I will uphold you in your design of quarreling with him, and hope

he will be turned out of the service. But you cannot see Morena."

"For what reason?"

"Doubtless in your family pride you have let her see that you considered it a great condescension on your part to love a woman in her degree. At least she knows that you care for her, and says she will not drag you down."

"I never intended to let her see that I was hesitating," said Gandelion, eagerly. "Let me see her; let me convince her that I love her."

"No; I promised her that you would not molest her. Have a little patience, and bend yourself to the task of finding this Helen Carlyon, for she has promised to leave the tribe and come to me, if that girl is saved."

"Good!" cried Gandelion. "Let me see her, if only in your presence, and induce her to leave the task of finding Helen Carlyon to me. No man has a greater influence among the tribes than I have to-day, for I have always counseled moderation, and McKay has lost prestige since to-day's fight."

Madame Lagrange went out, and after some time came back, leading Morena by the hand. Her eyes were downcast, and there were traces of tears upon her cheeks. Gandelion ran to her and took her hand, which he pressed ardently to his lips, while Morena hid her face upon the shoulder of Madame Lagrange.

"Why don't you send him away?" she whispered. "I am a coward, and dare not look him in the face."

"Do not hold her hand, Herbert," said his cousin. "You must remember your promise."

"That is the only reason I insisted upon seeing her. Morena, this good lady tells me that you have given your promise to come to her, the moment Helen Carlyon is found. Let me hear you say that this is true."

"I have promised," replied Morena, faintly. "Now leave me."

"Hear me first. Gilbert, the Guide, Owasco, Waterman, and the Irishman have vowed to find her, and now I add my oath to theirs. The danger is over except from a few wild spirits like Darromed, who will kill any man of the American nation who dares set foot in their country. We must proceed with caution, but you must remain here."

"Hush!" commanded Morena. "You know that my word is sacred, and I too have said that I would not turn back until I know that she is safe. It was only upon that ground that I gave my promise, and I must go at early morning."

"Are you determined?"

"Yes. Do your part, and at the right time trust me to help you. There are secret hiding-places among the Lake islands which no one knows as well as I do, and I will find out where McKay has hidden her myself."

"And when all is over, will you not give me hope, Morena? You know that I love you dearly, and would do anything for your sake."

"I can give no promise. Even if I live with this good lady, I am not the one to make you a fitting wife. I shall still remain a woman of unknown birth, and not the one your friends would meet as an equal, and Morena is too proud to meet them upon any other terms."

She drew herself up proudly and faced him with a haughty glance, which for a moment made her look like a queen.

"Have done with this, Herbert," said Madame Lagrange. "No more need be said upon this subject until your work is done. Good-evening, sir."

"And have you no farewell for me, Morena?" he said, sadly.

She gave him both hands instantly. "Good-bye, Gandelion," she said. "Whatever our fate, I will remember that you love me to the last of my days."

Gandelion pressed his lips to the hands again and again, and was gone. Morena passed the night in the arms of her adopted mother, and at early morning was ready to set out. Gandelion had left the post in the night, and she was not tried by another parting from him. A canoe was still lying upon the beach, and although the scouts of Wayne witnessed her departure, they had their orders and no effort was made to stop her. Madame Lagrange, from the parapet of the fort, saw her turn the head of her canoe down the river, pausing as she swept downward to take her plumed bonnet from her head and wave a graceful gesture of farewell.

The dew was not yet off the grass, and a cooling breeze fanned her brow as she paddled down the stream, scanning the shores as she passed on. Suddenly she paused, for a low, wailing cry of distress reached her ears from the western bank, and her ears were always open to the voice of despair. She turned the head of the canoe toward the bank, landed and looked about her. Nothing was in sight, and she called, in her clear, sweet voice. An answer came back from a hollow, which had once been the bed of a stream, long since run dry, and she hastened her steps. As she came near she saw a great eagle, with wide-spread wings, hovering over the gully, evidently meditating a descent. As she gazed he closed his wings and swept downward, while another cry of despair rung out upon the clear air of the morn-

ing. Taking off her cap, she waved it in the air, and uttered a shout, but the eagle swooped down, and disappeared. A cry of pain followed, and the great bird rose again, this time with bloody talons, and balanced himself for another descent. As he turned, Morena raised her carbine and fired, and the great bird closed his wings, and tumbled headlong to the earth. Hurrying down the slope, Morena saw protruding from the sod, the head and neck of a man, bleeding from the attack of the great bird. So marked was the face with blood, that it was with difficulty she recognized in it the countenance of Owasco, the Onondaga.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ON THE TRACK—THE ISLAND HOME.

How did he come there, buried to his neck in the earth, with nothing but his head above the sod? The earth was trampled hard about him, so closely indeed as to impede respiration, and his breath came thick and laboring. Morena took her dagger, and with it loosened the earth about his chest and throat, when he gave a gasp, and his head sunk upon one side. She worked hard, desperately, and in the course of half an hour had so loosened the earth that he was able to draw himself out of the cavity, lying prostrate upon the earth after the exertion, while Morena ran to the river and brought up a canteen full of water, which she dashed into his face, and in a twinkling he was himself again, and sat up, with a fiery and excited eye.

"Who did this?" she demanded.

"Darromed," was the reply, delivered in a tone of savage earnestness, "and for it I will have his scalp. Let us go."

He rose to his feet, but staggered as he walked, and she put out her hand to support him. But he waved her away with a lofty and impressive gesture.

"No," he said. "You are kind, but a chief must not lean upon a woman. The work before me I must do, and it will not be long before I shall recover strength and go about my duty."

He walked about upon the grass for a moment, and then turned to Morena.

"Darromed lay under my hand last night, and I would not slay him, because he was wounded and alone. But I followed him, for I knew that he could tell me where McKay had hidden the Pale Flower, whom the white men call Helen. I followed him like a dog upon the scent, but he found his friends and laid an ambush for me, and took me. Then he set me deep in the earth and trampled down the sod about me, and left me there to starve. My mouth was closed by a gag, but the eagle in his first swoop—for he came three times before you shot him—tore the cloth away. I will not rest until I have laid Darromed in as low a bed as this."

"Who comes?" cried Morena, suddenly, snatching up her rifle, and beginning to load it rapidly.

A footstep stirred the forest leaves, and a manly voice answered:

"A friend; hold your hand."

"Gilbert!" cried Owasco.

The bushes parted, and Owasco darted forward to meet his friend, who advanced with a hasty step, and the two clasped hands.

Owasco was the first to speak, and his voice trembled.

"Gilbert," he said, "the heart of Owasco has been very sad, for he thought the great hunter had gone to his long home. I have wept for you, as I did not weep when my nation was scattered, some to the east and some to the west. A great joy fills my heart this hour."

"I too am glad to meet you, Owasco," answered Gilbert, "for I feared that you had gone to your rest. How is it that I find you here, and what is the meaning of this hole?"

Owasco explained quickly.

"Generosity is thrown away upon a man like Darromed," exclaimed the Guide, with a stern look. "Owasco, do you know that I begin to feel that I am very near my end, and that I must find peace, perhaps in the grave, before many days are over? My dreams have been disturbed, and in them my murdered wife has come to me and whispered, 'Rest; your years of waiting and watching have borne fruit, and you shall in nowise lose your reward.' Let it come as it will, I feel a calm in my breast which I have not felt for years. Do you know what has become of Waterman?"

"He was taken that night, but escaped," replied Owasco.

"Then he is somewhere on the trail, and we shall find him. Where is Handy Pat?"

"He is with McKay."

"That is good. I am glad that Helen has a protector near her, for if the worst comes, Pat is not the man to see her wronged. Have you any idea where Helen is now?"

"Darromed told me that she was upon one of the islands in the bay."

"Ha; Morena, do you know any thing of these islands?"

"Yes; let us be on our way, for I must be the one to save Helen, whom I love like a sister. There is now no fear from the Indians, who will

be eager to make peace after their defeat at the rapids, and we can go in the canoe."

They went down to the bank and pushed out, and the three were soon gliding on between the silent banks, the chief and Guide working at the paddles, and Morena sitting in the stern, her keen eyes glancing from bank to bank.

"I saw Gandelion last night," said the Guide, "and parted from him at Fort Miami. Did you see him, Morena?"

The queen hung her head, and they could see enough of her neck to know that she was blushing.

"Yes, Gilbert."

"I don't like Englishmen overmuch, for they never did me any particular kindness, but that young man can ask any thing in my power to grant, and he shall have it. He is going to aid us in our search for Helen."

"Gandelion is a brave man," she said, slowly, "and he has the heart of a woman except when in battle."

"There are worse men upon the earth, I suppose," said Gilbert, with a roguish twinkle in his eyes. "At the same time, I can't say much for his brains. He don't know a great deal, I reckon."

The girl looked up quickly, with a glance of fiery anger, but catching the look in the eyes of the Guide, she hung her head again, and he laughed lightly.

"You have a poor opinion of the man, I can see," he said. "There, there, little girl; Gandelion and I understand each other, and we won't quarrel, you may be sure. What is that upon the bank, Owasco?"

"A man, looking from the bushes."

"Give me your carbine, Morena," said the Guide, laying his paddle carefully in the bottom of the canoe. "I guess I'll give the fellow a start, whoever it may be; I won't hurt him."

"Wait," said Morena, eagerly; "I think I know who it is. Let me see if he will not answer my call."

She bent forward and called out:

"Clinton Waterman!"

At this call, the man hidden in the bushes leaped up and ran down to the water's edge, and they saw that it was indeed the man they sought, ragged, bleeding and weary-looking, with unkempt hair and beard, and wild eyes. The canoe was pushed hastily to the bank and he sprang in, sinking exhausted in the bottom of the light craft.

"My poor fellow," said Gilbert, "I'm afraid you have had a hard time."

"I have indeed," he confessed, raising his head. "Oh, tell me, have you any trace of Helen?"

"Yes, we are now on our way to save her," replied Gilbert; "rouse yourself and be a man. Come, come; you look as if you had been dragged through a thorn-bush."

"I've had a wild ride," said the young man. "Do you see the bluff yonder? Does it look like a nice place to ride a mustang over? I did it, and still live. And then he took me such a course, through tangled brush and brake, over logs and stumps, and through thorny places, and I was glad to fling myself from his back and take my chances of broken bones. You are going to save Helen, you say? Then I am with you, heart and soul."

Where was Helen while her friends were passing through this fiery ordeal for her sake? She had been glad at any price to get out of the clutches of Darromed, although she feared McKay nearly as much. The great canoe in which she had been placed, glided out of the Miami at last, and into the bay which bears the same name. Some distance from the eastern shore were several small wooded islands, and toward these the canoe held its way. McKay had spoken but little, except to ask her from time to time if she was comfortable, and hoped she would learn to look more kindly on him, to which she returned no answer.

"Land in yonder cove, Malotta," he finally said.

The Indian who held the bow paddle, at once, by a dexterous sweep, brought the head of the canoe in to the bank, and leaped out, holding it firmly while the party landed, when two of them lifted it and laid it on the bank out of the water.

"Here we are," said the Briton, "and here you are likely to remain until you are willing to come to terms. Who would think of following you here across that broad expanse of water? I do not think it possible, and even if they should, I know a hiding-place which all their vigilance could not find out. How do you like the prospect?"

"Colonel McKay, does it please you to thus persecute a helpless woman?"

"No."

"Why then should you do it?"

"Because I love you. This is not the first time I have told you so, and I have still another reason for wishing to marry you."

"What might that be?"

"I will tell you when we are married, my darling," he said, with a cynical laugh.

"Suppose I promise to marry you, would you at once return me to my friends?"

"After we are married, certainly."

"Do you intend to have a marriage performed here?"

"Certainly. We happen to have in the Wyandot village an English chaplain, who will do the work effectually. Do you consent?"

"Return me to my friends, and then I will give you my answer."

"No, thank you; I prefer a bird in the hand. You will not leave this place until we are married. I am going to the mainland now, and shall return in a day or two with the chaplain I spoke of, and in the mean time you must make up your mind to submit, for I may take it into my head to marry you, even without your consent. Pat, come this way."

Pat, with a comical leer at Helen, which almost made her smile in the midst of her trouble, followed his master aside.

"I have told you what I expect you to do," explained McKay. "You are to watch Miss Carlyon, and see that she does not get away from the island. If, unfortunately for you, she should do so, you may as well drown yourself before my return."

"I'll not let her get away, master dear," declared Pat. "Sure the bloody spaldeen don't know what's good for her, or she'd be willin' to marry the likes av ye. Deed an' a bad world we live in, master."

"That will do. I don't care about any more blarney, if you please. Now then, Malotta, get out the canoe. But first, whistle for Mera. On the whole, I don't think I had better trust friend Pat."

The Indian raised a reed call to his lips and blew a shrill note. He had no sooner done so, than an Indian woman pushed her way from a forest path in their rear and came toward them—a perfect old witch, with grinning mouth, serrated teeth and glittering eyes.

"Take care of that girl, Mera," said McKay; "see that she don't get away."

Mera pounced upon Helen like a kite upon its prey, and seized her savagely by the arm. Helen uttered a low scream.

"Take care, you red hag!" shouted McKay, savagely. "I did not tell you to grapple her in that way. You can take care of her without that I should say."

Without reply, Mera dragged Helen down the forest path, closely followed by Pat, whose fingers itched to seize the old hag by the throat and choke her life out. He might have done so, but that he knew by the light steps behind him that a part of McKay's men were following him.

"Ah, you ould beauty!" he muttered. "Give me a chance at ye, that's all I ask."

In the center of the little woods a cabin had been built, and into this the hag pushed Helen, muttering fiercely. Pat would have gone into the hut after them, but the door was shut in his face, promptly, and he stood swearing on the threshold.

The grass about the cabin was fresh and green, and had evidently been kept with great care. Handy Pat sat down and whistled "Garryowen," looking keenly at the Four Wyandots who had remained behind.

"Fine lot of b'yes ye are, anyhow," he said, slowly, in his horrible English. "I'm right glad to mate ye."

The effect of this speech was somewhat weakened from the fact that neither of the Indians understood a word of English.

"Have ye any tobacco about ye, my lads?" he continued.

The Indians looked puzzled.

"Tobacky, tobacky; sorra til ye, an' til the likes av ye, I want some tobacky."

The leading Indian shook his head, and Pat went through a lively pantomime expressive of his wants, and ended by taking out a diminutive clay pipe, signifying that he desired a smoke. The Indians understood this, and one of them, more generous than the rest, furnished him with a supply of the fragrant weed, when he filled his pipe, lighted it by means of a flint and steel, and smoked tranquilly, blinking slowly at the Indians through the smoke.

Evening came on, and the Indians, leaving one of their number as a guard, wrapped themselves in their blankets and lay down before the door of the cabin. Pat smoked away peacefully, paying little attention to them until he became tired, when he began to yawn.

"It's sleepy I am, thin," he said, "powerful sleepy. Couldn't ye show me where I'd find a bed, mesther Injin?"

The savage shook his head; and Pat, after a fruitless attempt to make him understand, rolled over on the grass and fell asleep. When he awoke the Indians were up, smoking their pipes, and one of them offered him a handful of parched corn. With a wry face over the unsavory repast, the Irishman quickly swallowed it, and begging a further supply of tobacco, lighted his pipe and strolled down to the water's edge overlooking the mainland. The bay was as tranquil as a pond, and near at hand he saw two canoes, close together, rapidly approaching the island, in the foremost of which he saw the upright form of the Wyandot, Darromed, and in the next McKay.

"Ochone!" he said. "It's trouble I see be-

fore me darlint mistress. But wait; Handy Pat will lay down his life, an' welcome, sooner than see her come to harm."

CHAPTER XXIV.

AN INTERRUPTED BRIDAL.

SEVEN Indians landed, accompanied by a red-faced, puffy, wind-broken man, with the air of a drunken butcher, but who was in reality a cashiered chaplain, formerly attached to one of his majesty's regiments, but who had since cast his lot among the Indians. He was cracking anything except polished jokes with McKay, who was in excellent humor, while Darromed looked on with stolid, impassible looks.

"What is that away to the south?" asked McKay, pointing down the bay. "It looks to me like a sail."

"It is!" Darromed answered.

"It looks some like the little schooner Herbert Gandelion kept near Fort Miami. I hope he won't get wind of this affair, for if he does, with his high-spiced notions of rigid morality, he will be sure to interfere. I think we had better get this job done at once, Frisbee."

"I'm ready," admitted the chaplain. "I hope she won't squall and make a fuss."

"What is that to you? I don't suppose it is any business of any one except the girl and myself."

"Oh, that's all right. I'll marry you, of course, but don't blame me for it if you make a mess of it, as like enough you will do. I'm an odd kind of chicken, at least so the Bishop thought, or he wouldn't have sent me out here. Where is the girl?"

"Waiting in the cabin," responded McKay, "in eager expectation of the happy hour."

"Oh, none of that, colonel. You'll make me laugh if you keep on. The schooner is rising fast."

Indeed the white speck on the horizon was coming up rapidly, and evidently headed directly for the island, as if they knew precisely where to come.

"They act as if they knew what they were about," remarked McKay. "Let us get to work, and when I am married they may come as soon as they like. I've an account to settle with my very good friend Herbert Gandelion, and it may as well be settled now as at another time."

"What do you want to marry this forest beauty for, colonel?"

"Because my friend Darromed has told me something which makes it worth my while. Come on."

They hurried up the path toward the cabin, and knocked at the door. The Indian hag threw it open, putting on what she intended for a smile as she saw McKay, but which had more the appearance of a fiendish grin.

"Where is she?" demanded McKay.

Mera pointed to a door upon the other side of the room, and McKay rapped upon it, but no answer was returned.

"I wish to see you," said the colonel. "It will be better for you to come out at once."

"I shall do nothing of the kind, Colonel McKay," said a quiet voice within, "and I warn you, as you value your own personal safety, not to attempt to open that door."

"Do you refuse to come out?"

"Certainly, colonel. I refuse to come out."

"Then I will break down the door," roared McKay.

"You may do so, but the first man who crosses the threshold I will stab to the heart, as surely as my name is Helen Carlyon. Villain, do you think I will yield tamely to be made your victim? Not while I can hold a weapon."

"Bring an ax here," cried McKay. "I will break in the door."

An ax was brought, and one or two strokes drove the light door from its leather hinged, and revealed Helen, standing about a pace from the doorway, with the dagger with which she had before threatened the colonel raised above her head. There was something in her attitude which showed the man that she fully intended to use the knife, if he should be foolish enough to approach.

"This is all nonsense, Helen," expostulated the colonel, beginning to temporize. "You ought to know that resistance upon your part is worse than useless."

"I will keep my honor pure, even though I lose my life, you dastard. Stand back, for I am in that humor at this moment which will not brook an insult."

"Down with the knife, I say!"

"Not I! Touch me at your peril."

Mckay, white with rage, stood glaring at the resolute girl. He knew that each moment the schooner of Gandelion was drawing nearer and nearer to the island, probably bringing force enough to overpower his Indians.

"Let me shoot her," hissed Darromed. "She is mad, and deserves death."

"Will ye, ye dirty hound?" roared Pat, knocking him down with his clinched hand, and springing to the side of his mistress. "Never you fear, Miss Helen; while there's life in

his body, Handy Pat O'Driscoll will stand by ye. Whoop!"

Darromed rose, and poised his hatchet, while he sprung over the shattered door. Pat caught up one of the bars which had kept the door fast, and met his attack bravely, knocking him back several feet. Darromed threw his hatchet as he reeled backward, but his aim was wild, and Pat easily eluded it. None of the savages had come up with the exception of Darromed, and only three men faced the hardy Irishman and one of these was a non-combatant.

McKay, with a wicked smile, drew a pistol from his belt and leveled it at Pat, but Helen threw herself before him.

"Out of the way, girl!" cried the angry colonel. "I tell you that he is doomed."

"Fire if you dare!" replied Helen.

At this moment the clash of arms and wild shouts upon the beach announced a combat, and forgetting in a moment the Irishman, Darromed rushed out to aid his men. He found them engaged in a deadly conflict with Gilbert, the Guide, Owasco, and Clinton Waterman, who had crept up from the other end of the island, where they had landed during the night guided by Morena.

"A thousand curses on that girl!" screamed McKay. "She has betrayed me. Down with them, men; they deserve to die!"

Eighteen men to three is long odds, and these brave men knew it. But four of the Indians already lay dead or wounded on the sod, and high upon a solitary tree near the southern shore flaunted a white signal, directing the course of the approaching schooner, which could be seen close at hand, coming down upon the island with outspread wings, her little brass howitzers gleaming upon the deck. The three desperate men had taken a position in a bit of timber difficult to approach. They were well armed, for the night before, in passing the village, Morena had paused long enough to get weapons and ammunition for the chief and Waterman. Lying half-hidden by the bushes, they loaded and fired rapidly, making fearful havoc in the ranks of their assailants.

"Gather your men and make a rush at them, Darromed!" ordered McKay. "We must beat them before that schooner reaches the island."

Darromed gave a signal call, and at the sound a number of dark forms could be seen gliding swiftly through the thicket toward the three brave men. Three rifles cracked, and then they rose with knife and hatchet and waited. Owasco singled out Darromed, and the two closed, while fierce yells went up to the summer sky.

A reinforcement came. Handy Pat, shaking over his head the sprig of shillalah with which he had beaten down Darromed, came rushing to their aid, and at the same moment the schooner fired her howitzer through the upper branches of the trees, scattering them in all directions. This was more than the Indians—proverbially fearful of artillery—could bear, and they ran for dear life, leaving the white men masters of the field. One did not fly with the rest, and that one was Darromed, who lay upon the trampled sod, bleeding his life away through a fearful wound in his chest, while above him stood the Onondaga, looking down upon him with a cold proud air.

"I spared him once," he said, "and the same day he left me a prey to the eagle. Now he lies there, and I swore to give him as low a bed as mine was."

"Darromed," said the Guide, bending over him, "you and I have been enemies, and you know with how good cause. Years ago you robbed me of all that made life dear, and I have never forgotten nor forgiven. You are about to die, and if you have anything to tell me, I pray you to speak now."

"I will not speak," replied the Wyandot. "Ah-ha! Even in death I triumph yet, and so die happy. You shall never know, and it will wring your heart to the last."

At this moment the light schooner swept up to the bank, and an active figure bounded out and threw a line over the stump. Waterman was already gone, guided by the Irishman, and Morena, who had been standing in the thicket, just behind the white men, had come out upon the shore. The schooner was full of men, most of them wearing the uniform of Wayne's Legion, and near the little cabin stood a lady, closely veiled, with Gandelion by her side.

"There she is, dear cousin," said Gandelion, eagerly. "She is safe. Will you land?"

The lady gave him her hand, and they stepped ashore and walked slowly to the side of the dying chief.

"Morena!" gasped the Wyandot, come to me!"

The forest queen bounded to his side and knelt upon the sod.

"Can I do anything for you, chief? You have been very kind to me."

"What should you do?" replied the Wyandot. "I am going to the happy-hunting ground, to chase the deer forever beside the flowing river. You are left alone, and the power of the great nation is broken. Have you left them to go back to them no more?"

"I must dwell in the lodges of the white men from this hour, for I have given my word," replied Morena.

"Would it make you happier if you could know who your father was?" he asked.

"Yes, Darromed; will you not tell me, for the sake of the past?"

"Gilbert, the Guide, come near," said the chief, "and all you who would listen to a strange tale, hear me speak. Many years ago I went out upon the war-path, and surprised a stockade upon the upper Ohio. In that stockade lived a young white man who had been a great war-chief under the great Washington. The chief was away, and we took them all, the squaw and two little children. The slaves were killed, and we took much spoil. The stockade was burned to the ground."

"In my band I had three nations: Wyandots, Hurons of the Lakes, and Pottawatomies. The Pottawatomies took one child, the Hurons took the woman, and the other child fell to my share."

"Darromed, do not keep me in suspense!" cried Gilbert. "What did you do with that child?"

"Suppose she wearied on the way and I killed her?" the Wyandot replied, questioning.

"Beware that you do not confess any such crime as that!" cried Gilbert, with a fierce look.

"What did you do with the child?"

Madame Lagrange had drawn near, and it was plainly to be seen that she was fearfully excited. Her hands wreathed themselves one within the other, and her breath came thick and labored; and her eyes were never turned from the steadfast face of Gilbert, the Guide, as he bent over the dying chief.

"What care I for your threats?" replied the chief. "I can only die, and but for Morena's sake, who has been true to the Wyandots, I would not tell you now, for your hand laid my father and my brother low, and only spared me because you knew I held the secret whether your daughter lived or died. Give me some drink."

Gilbert held a brandy-flask to his lips, and he took a sip of the fiery fluid.

"Your child it was, Gilbert, who fell to my share. I took her to my village and trained her to forget that she had not always lived among us. *There she stands, Morena, Queen of the Lake!*"

Gilbert uttered a glad cry, and Morena, raising herself, fell sobbing into his arms. The face of the Guide seemed to be transfigured, and his eyes gleamed with a joy which had not been there for years as he pressed her to his breast, and kissed her again and again.

"At last, at last!" he cried. "After many years."

Darromed raised himself upon his elbow, and looked at the pair, who for a moment forgot that any other creature breathed. At length Gilbert started, and putting Morena gently aside, though still clasping her hand, he turned to the dying warrior.

"You have given me back my daughter, chief; where is my wife?"

"Here I" cried a solemn voice, sweet and musical.

CHAPTER XXV.

REUNION.

ALL turned toward the speaker, and saw that it was Madame Lagrange. She had thrown aside her veil, and revealed a face which, although it bore marks of a life of sorrow, was still beautiful. She put out her hands to Gilbert with a touching gesture of supreme love and faith. The next moment he held her close up to his beating heart—the wife he had lost many a year before! It was a touching scene there, in that beautiful island, beside the silent lake, and there was not a dry eye among the lookers-on. Even the Onondaga turned away his head, in the presence of this enduring love.

Gilbert, with one arm about his wife and the other clasping his daughter, looked up to heaven with streaming eyes. Darromed, with rapidly-glazing eyes, looked upon the happy trio with a smile, even as he felt the pangs of death upon him.

"Morena!" he gasped.

She released herself from her father's arm and stooped over him.

"I am dying," he said. "For the sake of the kindness the tribe have done you, do not suffer the body of a chief to be mutilated. Lay me down under these bending trees, with my dead warriors about me, and let none know that underneath the grass-grown and flowery sod rests the clay of a great chief. Hark; I hear the voice of warriors who have gone before calling me to the spirit-world. They wait for me to join them beside the rapid river, where the white man cannot come, Morena, I—"

The voice was hushed in death. Darromed was at rest. He whose whole life had been one of violence did not sleep the less peacefully because he slept in a place where for many

years the foot of the encroaching white man could not come.

"And where is Helen?" asked Gilbert, as they laid the chief gently down. "Ah, there she is. Morena, go and meet her!"

The sweet girl sprung away, and met Waterman, Helen and Pat returning from the hut where Helen had remained through the fight. All that Clinton needed to say to Helen was: "This is Morena; love her, for my sake."

Madame Lagrange, or rather Estelle Gilbertson, for that was the true name of the man so long known as Gilbert, the Guide, met the sweet pair, and taking Helen's hand in hers, kissed her tenderly, and then looked with a puzzled expression from face to face.

"What is your name, my sweet child?" she said. "Husband, what does this mean?"

"My name is Helen Carlyon, madam," replied Helen. "I do not understand you."

"Have you any reason to believe that Carlyon is not your real name?"

"It is not, madam. My real name I never knew, for Major Carlyon took me from an Indian village when I was a little child and adopted me. The Indians did not know my name, but only that I was taken in one of their forays."

"Have you anything which you wore when you were a child?"

"Only this," said Helen, and putting her hand into her bosom, she drew out a little locket, the exact counterpart of the one which Gilbertson and Morena had worn. There could be no doubt that this was the locket which Estelle Gilbertson had put upon the neck of her infant daughter many years before, and with a great cry of joy, the reunited family clasped hands at once. It was a wonderful meeting; and the stern bordermen looked on with amazed eyes, not undimmed by tears.

"I need but few words to tell my story," said Mrs. Gilbertson, Madame Lagrange no longer. "The Hurons took me to their village, far to the north, and for three years I was a prisoner there, though kindly treated. At the end of that time I was ransomed by an Englishman and taken to Quebec. There I found my relatives, and from thence sent two Indian runners to the Ohio, to find out whether my husband was alive. They brought back word that he had disappeared long ago, and although every one believed him dead, no one could tell where his bones were laid. I thought my children dead too, and could not bear to return, and so I staid in Montreal until six years ago, when I came to York, where I found my cousin, Herbert Gandelion, who had been sent out as an Indian agent under McKay. At York I first saw this dear child, and my heart went out to her at once. Little did I dream that she was one of the twin daughters I lost so long ago. Since that time I have been trying to win her from her Indian friends, and only succeeded yesterday in forcing a promise from her."

"My story is enough to fill a volume, Estelle," said Gilbertson, "but I will be as short as you. I have been a wanderer ever since my loss, when I came to my ruined home and found nothing but smoking rafters and whitened bones. I knew the band which did the deed, and since that time I have lived as an avenger. That time is over, thank God. and you and I, together with these sweet children, will live anew our lives."

At this moment McKay advanced with a smiling face.

"The reuniting of this family was to have been my task," he said. "Unfortunately, I was interrupted."

"Colonel McKay," said Gandelion, "have you penetration enough to understand that your presence is not required here, and the sooner you climb into a canoe and leave the better it will be for you?"

"How so, sir? Do you dare speak in that way to me?"

"I do, sir. Yesterday you were my superior officer, but to-day you are not. My resignation as sent in a month ago has been accepted by the commander-in-chief, and, as a private citizen, I shall feel constrained to pull your nose the very first time I meet you elsewhere."

"It is very brave to quarrel in the presence of ladies," sneered McKay, turning pale.

"It is that very fact that prevents me from performing the operation now," replied Gandelion, coolly.

"I demand a passage to the fort upon your schooner."

"Your foot never shall pollute a deck of mine, sir; I refuse, and wonder at your impudence in making the request. Find those Indian renegades and let them paddle you to the mainland, and be sure you take Frisbee with you, or I will tar and feather him."

With a glance of mingled fury and fear, McKay strode hastily away and buried himself in the woods, and Gandelion turned with a smile to Gilbertson.

"I suspected this ever since the night you were wounded with the poisoned arrow, my dear sir. The locket you wear fell from your neck, and I recognized the face of my cousin

Estelle as I remembered her when you married her. Your own words have come true at last; night is ended and day is coming on."

"You tell the truth, Gandelion, and I, as Gilbertson, repeat the advice which Gilbert the Guide, gave you on the banks of the Miami. My consent you need not ask, for it is given already, and I find I have gained a daughter only to lose her to you. Morena?"

"Her name is Clara, husband," said Estelle.

"Keep that for state days. I imagine that Gandelion will always call her by the name under which he knew and loved her. I know that she loves you, Herbert, and I am happy in her choice."

"And I," said Estelle, placing her daughter's hand in Herbert's. "Cherish her, Gandelion, for she has a true and noble heart."

"I do not intend to leave you," said Gandelion. "On the contrary, I will take up land near your own, wherever you may abide, and we will labor to build up in the wilderness a strong young State, to add to the galaxy of stars in this young but glorious flag."

"Let this be a day of happiness," added Gilbertson. "Clinton, I am not the man to interfere with the wishes of my daughter. You had won her love long ago, and I hope it will be the same as before, and no man could better choose his sons-in-law." I hope you two will be steadfast friends."

"We shall," said Herbert, extending his hand to Clinton Waterman. "At least I hope so."

"It shall not be my fault if we are not," replied Clinton, pressing his hand.

"Huroo!" cried Pat. "More power til ivy wan, and good luck go wid ye."

"Will you go with me, Pat?" said Gilbertson. "Wherever I have a home I will see that you are provided for."

"I'll folly ye," cried Pat, "while I've a fut to go an."

They pushed out the light schooner from the shore and sailed away for Miami. Next day they joined the army of Wayne, and remained with it until a party started for the Ohio. Owasco had remained with them until now, but here he bade the friend of many years good-by.

"I have not many words," he said, as he caught Gilbertson's hand and laid it upon his heart. "You will be very happy, and will not care to walk the woods. Sometimes Owasco will come and look upon your happiness, and his heart will be glad."

With these words he was gone, and for many months they did not see his face again. Gilbertson took up his old land upon the Ohio, the title of which he had not lost, and in this now smiling land, with his dear wife, sat down to live a life that atoned for past sorrows.

When the autumn leaves were falling there was merrymaking at the farm-house, and a double wedding. The youth and maidens of the country, far and near, came one and all, and puzzled themselves to decide which of the two brides looked most lovely. No longer roaming the woods, the complexion of Morena became nearly as fair as that of Helen, and it was hard for a stranger to tell them apart. The solemn words were said, and these, who had suffered together, were made happy at last.

Handy Pat, now the Gilbertsons' right-hand man, indulged in so much peach brandy as to become inebriated, but was pardoned the offense for the occasion.

Major Carlyon was at the wedding, a noble-looking old man, not yet quite reconciled to the loss of his daughter.

The clergyman was in the midst of the service when there was a stir at the door, and Owasco, travel-stained and jaded, stood before them. With the natural politeness of the Indian he said nothing, but kept his place near the door until the ceremony was over, before he greeted his old friends.

As soon as Gilbertson was at liberty he hurried to meet the Onondaga, and their strong hands met in a gripe which told how joyful was the meeting.

"Gilbert has not forgotten," said the Onondaga, his face lighting up. "It is well, and I am content. I am going to the distant West, and you may never look upon my face again, and I could not go without seeing the faces which have looked kindly on me. Good-by, one and all."

He waved his hand with a mute but touching gesture of farewell, and was gone, and they never saw him more.

Gilbert kept out of the reach of Gandelion, who was forced to forego the pleasure of pulling his nose. It was not until some time after that they understood why he had wished to marry Helen, when a great fortune fell to Mrs. Gilbertson which had lain without an heir for some time. Then they became satisfied that McKay knew this, and that Darromed believed Helen to be the daughter of Gilbertson. They never heard or cared to hear of him again, but lived out their happy lives and helped to build up the great State in which they had suffered so much and so long.

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